THE ROAD TO CULTURE

CHARLES GRAY SHAW

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The Road to Culture

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The
ROAD TO CULTURE

BY

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TO
MY DAUGHTER
LYDIA GRAY SHAW

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I. *The Demand for Culture*

I

THE DEMAND FOR CULTURE

FROM LUXURY TO NECESSITY

CULTURE was once a luxury in the minds of a few people; it is now a necessity in the lives of many. The advancement of knowledge by means of books, the popularizing of art through photography, and the accessibility of music over the radio have brought culture to our homes. The paths of culture are as open to our minds as highways to the automobile. When culture is properly understood and justly appreciated, it will be found indispensable to all who wish really to live.

The adornment of the mind is akin to the adornment of the body. Time was when furs and silks were marks of royalty and signs of aristocracy. Ermine adorned the king's robe and silk was the stuff of courtiers. But with the advance of industry and the enrichment of human life, furs and silks are accepted as a matter of course in correct attire. Industry and taste have developed side by side so that the person of moderate means may enjoy the one-time refinements of aristocracy.

Culture is a luxurious necessity in an age of material and mental wealth. It is the prevailing mode, the style. It is just as fully within our reach as the fine stuffs that the well-dressed person should wear. This does not mean that culture and clothing can be had for the asking. When we wish to dress well, we work and earn and buy. When we wish to feel comfortable in our minds and look well mentally, we must pursue an appropriate plan. Then we shall not be crude in our thought or awkward in our speech.

This does not mean that we can buy culture as tho it were something on the market. No, for culture is that costly thing that is above all price. A wealthy person may purchase sets of exquisitely bound books and place them in a mahogany bookcase, but the culture in a book belongs only to the mind that reads and comprehends and enjoys the work. *Culture is a state of mind like happiness, not the physical possession of something like real estate.*

A person of vast wealth may assemble a collection of old masters in gilt frames so that people will refer to the masterpiece as that which cost so many thousands of dollars. But any person can acquire culture from art by visiting a public art gallery, provided he will view with feeling and study with care what the artist has placed upon the canvas.

The greatest things in life are sometimes the simplest. What can be greater than sea or sky? Yet every serious person can feel the immensity he cannot fathom and enjoy the mystery he cannot comprehend. Culture is just this appreciation of the vast and deep in human life—the sea and sky of the soul. In itself, it is a personal achievement, not a social triumph; but once culture is acquired by the private mind, it will reveal itself publicly, like a fire that has been kindled.

The Demand for Culture

GROWING CULTURE-CONSCIOUS

Popular culture is increasing. All people appreciate civilization as they realize what it has done to facilitate life and contribute comfort. Some people are now beginning to value culture for the sake of the personal satisfaction and social value it affords. All of us are the heirs to both civilization and culture, the twin products of man's attempt at self-perfection. Yet we realize that one of the noble steeds man has hitched to his chariot has been outrunning the other, for we are more civilized than cultured and have more urbanity than refinement.

But now we are growing culture-conscious. We feel that social existence without an intellectual and esthetical content is merely a shell. Individuals are awakening to the idea that material success is not everything and that there is something about life which business and social enjoyment cannot include. That "something" is culture—the mark of the successful mind.

Man has always aimed at skill, learning and enlightenment, but the full and harmonious development of the human spirit has occurred at only specially favored periods, as the age of Pericles and the Italian Renaissance, or in the England of Queen Elizabeth and the France of Louis the Fourteenth. America saw its beginnings of culture in the days of Puritan and Cavalier, but it was not until a century ago that Emerson, in his address on *The American Scholar*, awakened our national culture consciousness.

But these were special periods of intellectual aristocracy when culture was a luxury for the few. The present is a democratic age wherein culture has become a necessity for people generally. Now, that is why special attention must be paid to the present culture problem, and why, further, some means must be devised to stimulate and guide the new culture in America.

CULTURE AND CONFLICT

Like many other things, the popular desire for culture has widened and yet become more definite since the World War. That colossal conflict turned the world upside down and created new ideas and new wants. These are apparent on every hand; among them is the demand for popular culture. "War creates culture," said the German philosopher and patriot, Fichte. War was the means by which the late German Kaiser hoped to spread *Kultur* throughout the world, altho his *Kultur* spelt with a K was different from the usual kind spelt with the simple C. What the Kaiser wished to spread abroad was the German system of politics and economics, of which *Kultur* was only the euphemistic name.

For practical purposes it will be unnecessary to dwell upon the idea that there is a connection between conflict and culture. We may feel, in fact, that if the advancement of the arts and sciences depends upon bloodshed, we might better remain uncultured and peaceful. We would rather cultivate the humaneness of the heart than the cultured humanism of the intellect. Indeed, what we would rather do is to place culture upon a peaceful, democratic basis. It is something like this that is now being attempted in America.

But, as a matter of fact, the war, or the passing of the war, has been the occasion of a cultural awakening. This has come about in connection with the new wealth of the country. People find themselves in possession of money available for things of comfort and entertainment; the omnipresent auto and radio are far from being mute evidences of that financial fact. These mechanical devices extend our horizons and disclose new worlds on earth and air. They make us conscious of ourselves as the recipients of varied sensations and create desires for some of the intangible, imponderable values of life.

When this broadening and intensifying of life is fully appreciated, it assumes the form of culture, or the inward appreciation of the life so often lived in an outward manner. Then, too, the wealth at our disposal suggests the possibility of acquiring the things of culture, as these are to be found in paintings, books, operas, plays. No longer do we ask, what shall we eat and drink, wherewithal shall we be housed and clothed, but how shall we be entertained and improved? We feel that money invested in esthetics, if we may put it that way, is money well spent. It will yield that thing which was impressive in old Greek but significant in even modern English—"a permanent possession."

EUROPEAN ENLIGHTENMENT

To dwell a moment longer on the fairer fruits of the war, we may point to that tragic event as something which enriched us with European contacts, for culture is the Europeanization of the human mind. Our soldiers may not have returned in full command of a foreign language. The returning transports were hardly laden down with works of art and volumes of classic literature. But the fact that our youth had been across the sea aroused us to the idea that we had something to learn about both diplomacy and culture. We have decided to avoid foreign entanglements, but we are not so immune now to Old-World ideals. We are in touch with Europe and intend to live pretty much as do the more mature nations of the world. Indeed, we might venture the suggestion that, while the Old World is busy nursing its wounds and repairing its demolished cities, it may be possible for America to take as commanding a place in the pursuit of culture as it does in the promotion of commerce.

This connection with the Old World, which is bound to produce cultural effects, is being kept alive by travel. Americans have always visited Europe, but not in such large companies as now take their vacations abroad. The older generation of travelers were often "innocents abroad" who satisfied their national sense of humor by setting up comical contrasts between traditional modes of living and modern ways of doing things. The children of these "innocents" have often been plutocrats who failed to appreciate ancient art because it was not accompanied by modern improvement. Their standard was that of plumbing. But the modern traveler is more inclined to feel that the Old World has lessons for him to learn, primarily the lesson of culture. He will return to his native land no less patriotic but more philosophical.

AN INTELLECTUAL INVENTORY

When we attempt an intellectual inventory, we find that America has in it the seeds of culture sown on good ground. At the bottom of our intellectual life is the public school system, which, with all its actual defects, is based on the idea that civilization depends upon enlightenment. We believe that good conduct will follow from clear thinking, and that the intellect must guide the will. This does not mean that national culture is a matter of pedagogical procedure, but it does express the idea that modern America, like ancient Athens, is pledged to the Socratic ideal. We are indeed a practical people, but we believe that our activities should run on tracks. One might imagine that the Prophet Daniel had such a nation in mind when he prophesied, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

The cultural balance-sheet is bound to itemize the broadening effects of the newspaper, even when recent developments in journalism do not make for "sweetness and light." In its objectivity, the daily paper reports the affairs of the world without much regard to proportion; but it is not supposed to be a learned magazine or polite periodical. Yet the sheer fact that the news in one's daily paper has been gathered in by a gigantic organization which harvests every field under the sun has the effect of broadening the mind, enlarging the heart of sympathy, and enhancing human interest. The reader of a good modern newspaper must be pretty thoroughly encrusted if he can remain within the shell of provincialism.

When it is a matter of the Sunday newspaper, with its supplements, one has a still larger opportunity to extend his interests by reading contributed articles by talented minds dealing with the important issues of the day in art and science, politics and progress generally.

The calculation of the amount of general culture at one's disposal should not fail to mention radio. Here, with the twist of a knob, the voice of the nation becomes audible; for what is said, as it were, in the secret of the studio, is heard as from the housetops. Naturally, much that comes over the air cannot be classed as cultural, but the person of good taste can hear the voice of prima donna or robust tenor, can follow the orchestra through the rendition of a symphony by Beethoven or Brahms. If one will take heed what he heareth, he can gather from the air as much musical culture as his parents could acquire by the consistent pursuit of opera and philharmonic. The very distance of the performance and the invisibility involved are bound to suggest that spiritual atmosphere which is inherent in the idea of culture as something remote and spiritual.

INTERROGATIVE MOODS

In more solid ways, there is the present interest in books, which provide one with knowledge about the vital values of life. Quite often, these things which catch us in our interrogative moods are only so many "Do You Know Thats?" or "Ask Me Anothers." But, again, it can be *The Story of Mankind*, *The Story of Science*, *The Story of Philosophy*. The fact that such works can be "best sellers" is evidence of our interest in the things of real and permanent value.

A considerable portion of the population has awakened to the charm of culture and the possibility of attaining it. These questing spirits feel that literature and art and science are no longer sealed books, but, as it were, epistles known and read of all mankind. Those who read such books may not be alive to every detail which the careful author has worked out, but they become conscious of that stream of humanity of which they are a part. Now, whatever else culture may be, it may be understood as one's consciousness of his own humanity.

The practical application of this introductory sketch of the subject can easily be made. Culture does have a distinct relationship to Europe, but that does not mean that we should quit our native land and take up our residence abroad. The ancient Greeks got their classicism by staying at home. If culture means reading, it does not follow that you should close your office and open your library. Professional librarians, whose book-lore is often alarming, are not always cultured people. Culture may mean music and drama, but it does not follow that one should rush from business to the opera or theater to catch up on opera and the stage. The ushers who are seen there nightly seem not to have profited by their unusual opportunities. Just as little do we need to turn from a cabinet of letter files to a shelf of books just so many feet long.

No, we can become cultured by leading pretty much the same sort of life as has been our custom, but in a different spirit.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Popular culture is a sign of the times. People do want money, and are willing to work and speculate in order to acquire wealth. They crave entertainment, and throng moving-picture shows and miniature golf courses in the feverish pursuit of such ideal pleasure. But beneath these hectic tendencies of the age there are more determined movements in the direction of the things that make for a sound mind in a sound body. The result is physical and intellectual culture. You are expected to be concerned about "that body of yours," as also about "that mind of yours." As a people, we are "sold" on the ideas of hygiene and learning. We desire to cultivate the arts and sciences so that no longer shall we have to say of ourselves, "Yes, we have no national culture."

Culture itself has been in the world ever since man became man. It is contemporaneous with human life; it is the cause of which humanity is the effect. In the larger sense, culture includes art, science and religion, which are just so many of man's attempts to improve his condition and himself.

This culture may merely have emerged from nature in the course of evolution or may have been engendered by man himself; but it is now fully established and operates as the most characteristic thing in human life. The uncultured person is not a human being.

ARE WE HUMAN BEINGS?

Before attempting any definition of culture, the word may be taken to mean humanity. But this term must be understood in a spiritual rather than a social sense. It should indicate the quality of human life in an individual instead of the quantity of life in a group. Thus conceived, culture will come to mean an individual's relation to himself, and not so much his position in the social order. Personal culture may have the effect of reacting upon the life of the mass, so that cultured individuals shall be as the salt of the earth; but it is still the individual who is to become cultured. As Aristotle pointed out, medicine is a general science, but it is always the individual who is to be cured. Culture has its general character, its history; but it is the individual in whom the seed of culture must spring up.

The need of culture is something which the private individual must feel. Society can insist upon law or morality, and perhaps religion, but it can never insist upon culture. There is no commandment which says to the individual, "Thou shalt paint, shalt carve statues and write poems." In like manner, there can be no law which shall insist that one shall love beauty, appreciate art and develop taste. These are free obligations, or imperatives, which the individual must impose upon himself. Just as in the time of confusion in ancient Israel after the death of Solomon, so now. Every one must take himself to his own tent. There he must consider what sort of creature he is, and what kind of life he is supposed to lead.

Without culture, as has been suggested, we are not human beings. We may be creatures of earth who are under the general care of Mother Nature. We may be robots of industry who look to society for a living, or we may be the children of men who live their blessed lives in innocence of what is actually going on in the world. But to be thoroughly human beings and mature men and women we must have some measure of culture.

Culturists, so to style them, have always associated culture with humanity, so that the term "Humanism" is only another name for our general subject-matter. Such humanistic culture amounts to little more or less than a general awareness of what is going on in the world. Most of us feel that we should be up on the news and have an eye to the real headlines of the press. Some of us feel that we should participate in the troubled affairs of Europe rather than emulate the example of the tortoise and stay in our shells. But keeping abreast of the news and participating in world politics are different matters. The question before us is this: Do we intend to take our own individual place in the intellectual life of the world, past and present? If we do, we shall turn to culture as our guide, and expect the arts and sciences to make us truly human beings.

CULTURE CONSCIOUSNESS

Your culture is the awakening of your consciousness to the meanings and values of a life habitually taken for granted. It is the proper exercise of the brain. In the pursuit of health, you do not have to become a professional golfer. You have health on your mind as a desideratum, and make a minimum of exercise serve as tonic for the organism. It can be just the same with culture as with health in a sort of home gymnasium of the mind. You are not to become a scholar toiling in library or museum. Your aim is not that of the artist in his studio. But you can arouse your sense of appreciation to the level of your inherent possibilities, and *culture is largely the ability to admire wisely.*

Of course, there is some study involved in the pursuit of this esthetic benefit; but so is study necessary before one can take a trip abroad or even choose a pleasant summer resort. Culture, too, has its maps and Baedekers, but the person who is intent upon the cultural excursion will not begrudge the hours spent in judicious reading or debit the energy expended upon the cultivation of thought and taste.

Culture is of an intellectual character, but is just as much an emotional state of mind. It is active, too, being akin to what Aristotle called "the energy of contemplation," comparable to the serene activity of the gods on high Olympus. When the spirit of culture dawns upon our mundane lives, we shall say what was said of Beatrice when she appeared in Paradise: "Behold one who will increase our loves." Such is the maiden one must court, must court as Dante did—by means of culture.

TRYING TO DEFINE CULTURE

Thus far we have been proceeding upon the assumption that we knew what culture meant; but we must turn to definition, or definitive description.

The old question used to be, "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" Our modern question is, "Where shall culture be found, and who is the cultured person?" Yet how disappointing every definition outside of science is bound to be, since the letter killeth the spirit that giveth life! We verily know what we mean by "Charm," but into what traits would we resolve it? We feel the sense of "Humor," but dread to define it in so many words. Thus, we realize what is meant by "Culture," for we have observed it in others and felt it in ourselves if only as an aspiration.

We point to ancient Athens as a place where culture was found, and try, perhaps, to restore it by the study of the classics or the contemplation of Greek art. We feel its presence in the art of the old masters of the Renaissance and wonder whether our more sophisticated modern painting has preserved that priceless spirit. Then, we consider it in the criticism of Emerson and Matthew Arnold, in Sainte-Beuve and Saintsbury, in more recent minds like James Huneker and Barrett Wendell. But accurate definition is another matter.

CULTURE NOT ERUDITION

We may begin in a tentative and negative way by saying that culture is not knowledge. Indeed, we might go to extremes for the sake of effect and suggest that one may have all knowledge but no culture, while another may have all culture but no knowledge. That, of course, is exaggeration bordering on prevarication, yet there is a degree of enlightening truth in that paradox.

Intellect and culture are inseparable, but not identifiable; they meet like land and sea, and yet maintain their respective attributes. The intellectual person has knowledge; the cultured person loves knowledge. "Quantity of knowledge," said Schleiermacher, "is not quantity of piety." An earlier and more renowned theologian said: "Tho I have all knowledge and understand all mysteries and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." In its relation to knowledge, culture is like charity, like piety.

When one acquires knowledge by study or investigation, it is for the sake of the thing known. When this knowledge becomes culture, it is for the sake of the knower. Culture is not the possession of knowledge or works of art or books, but the enjoyment of these.

The question is whether the possession of the intellectual or esthetical works its change within you, so that your knowledge clarifies, beautifies and fortifies your inward spirit as a human being. Does it make it possible for you to "survey the spectacle of life with appropriate emotions," or to "see life steadily and see it whole"? It cannot yield a philosophical principle, like a category in Kant's *Kritik*, or a formula like that of gravitation in Newton's *Principia*. But it can give you the insight which was enjoyed in a complete and creative manner by Browning and Shelley, by Goethe and Schiller, by Milton and Shakespeare.

Like charity, culture is the spirit which views the field of knowledge with more sense of appreciation than analysis. It is akin to the enjoyment of a landscape apart from the geology of the terrain. Knowledge there must be, but knowledge as something felt, not as a process of cognition which gives light without heat.

Wisdom is the application of knowledge to the exigencies of life. Technicalism is knowledge with a view to immediate industrial utilization. *Culture is knowledge for the sake of its enjoyment and human value.*

In all forms of knowing, we cultivate a kind of garden with an eye to the autumnal harvest. But when we till the garden of culture it is more for the sake of the gardener himself than for the flower and fruit of the soil. Mere knowing will not suffice.

THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF ATHENS

The same is true of learning. Here we must part company with those who tend to identify "culture" with the painful acquisition and doubtful possession of dead languages. If it could be shown that culture is that academic thing which our fathers followed, but did not really pursue, when they learned their Latin and Greek, then most of us are debarred from the Kingdom of the True and Beautiful and Good. If some one insists that culture is Grecian consciousness, we may reply that Æschylus and Sophocles, Phidias and Praxiteles, Socrates and Plato did use Greek, but it was not Greek to them. It was their vernacular, as Chinese in China, Russian in Russia and English in the United States. Grecian culture was natural and indigenous, not foreign and exotic. In the Revival of Learning, which was but a symptom of the Renaissance; in the development of the English university and the American college, Greek played its part. But the effects of this supreme language appear in archeology rather than art, in mental discipline rather than spiritual culture.

One may rejoice in the Grecian spirit but lack the letter of the Greek language. By dint of spiritual effort, one may so exert intuition as to urge his mind back to that creative feeling which the Greeks enjoyed before they put their impressions in their own language—the only language they knew. Shakespeare did that in independence, or ignorance, of classic grammar; so did Goethe, whose knowledge of ancient Greek did not affect his modern German; so did Wagner in his pagan ideal of robust music, and so do all creative artists whose brush or pen responds to the original urge which the Greeks expressed with such authenticity.

If you ever mastered any Greek or Latin, muster out all the words and forms your memory holds in reserve; but if you desire culture, you can create this by the judicious, tasteful use of the English language,which has grown up from Greek and Latin, French and German roots, so that it is both a foreign language and a mother tongue.

WILL NOT ENGLISH DO?

Mother tongues of one sort or another have always been the true basis of national culture. Dante used such Italian as he had. What did not Shakespeare do with his ten thousand words of English! What a world of human characters did Balzac introduce in his Human Comedy, where all of them spoke French! And what a miracle did Ibsen perform upon a grim Nordic stage, where the thrilling dialog was carried on by means of the rugged Norse language!

In the matter of conscious culture, which shows itself in the art of criticism, Emerson voiced transcendental ideals without the aid of any classic culture; such culture, indeed, failed to appeal to him. Matthew Arnold was born and bred in the classic spirit, praised and furthered "Hellenism," but his own forms of self-expression were distinctly modern, definitely Anglican.

In our own demand for culture, we may feel the need of Grecian stuff by way of nurture. We may require Grecian forms, as displayed by architecture and sculpture, poetry and drama, to guide our thoughts, as Dante needed Vergil as his pilot. But we should not be so impressed by the manner of a language as by its matter; for it is not the way the author speaks to us, but what he says, which counts for culture.

Again, we may cite St. Paul, whom we found preferring charity to knowledge, and who said, "I would rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand in an unknown tongue."

It is true that the use of a foreign phrase, like *non sequitur* or *savoir vivre*, may give one the appearance of culture; but the person who is really cultured reveals this august fact in his flexible vocabulary and fluent pronunciation of his own language. When one makes use of a foreign language, he sets himself apart from his own community and enjoys a certain amount of distinction; but when his mastery of his own tongue is something superlative, he transcends that community and raises himself to a higher personal level. The foreign language will give you learning, but culture must come in a more vital way in the use of a language which to you is a living one.

CULTURE NOT ETIQUETTE

At the other extreme of a culture-philosophy, far removed from the notions of knowledge and learning, is the idea that the desired perfection of the human spirit is to be found in refinement and social prestige. A "cultured" person thus understood comes from the best families, rejoices in fine manners, and avoids the *faux pas*.

There was indeed a sense of aristocracy involved in the Greek notion of the beautifully good, or *kalokagathia*. Such superiorism appeared again in the chivalrous culture of the thirteenth century, was seen in the dignity of Italian noblemen who patronized the art of the Renaissance, just as it was effective in creating the cultured lady and gentleman of the Victorian period.

This notion of culture as a kind of etiquette is not easily disposed of, and there is no reason why we should try to divorce fine taste from good manners. Yet, we do not wish to confuse the perfection of the mind with the sense of propriety in a person. The "cultured" person makes the proper *entrée*, and sits suitably at the table, where his manners are as faultless as his attire. But if his subsequent conversation reveals the fact that he is lacking in all intellectual and esthetic appreciation, we know that his "culture" is only the gilt top to a blank volume. His book of culture is one that has still to be written.

KNOWING WHAT TO DO WITH ONE'S SELF

The polite conception of culture is too light, as the learned notion of it was too heavy. It is desirable to have a scholarly mind and fine manners, but culture is nothing borrowed from a library or taken from a court. No, rather than the learning of the scholar or the polish of the socially experienced person, it is a fine way of thinking and a graceful way of living, out of which will come the aristocracy of a noble spirit.

Culture is no social thing, but something individual. Its superiority as an accomplishment is found in the fact that it makes one unique. Then appears, if only on the shining surface, the heartening fact that culture provides private entertainment for the mind which has come into the possession of it. One is distinctly one's self when alone, detached from business, far from friends and thrown upon one's own resources. Such solitude is the test of culture, its presence or absence. It shows what one is like and feels like when solitary. Of him who has made the conquest of culture it may be said, "Thou art entered into thy kingdom!"

The person who lacks this cultural boon may succeed in filling up his life when he is absorbed with people and the things of this world, but once alone he is placed in a predicament. He "does not know what to do with himself." Precisely! He has no interior existence into which he can retreat as a man into his home or a tortoise into its shell.

Now, culture is above all things else *the art of knowing exactly what to do with one's self* when one is physically alone or psychologically solitary in the crowd. It is at such supreme moments of life that the cultured person begins to draw upon his own resources or feed upon the goods laid up in store. His mental house is indeed his castle, and his mind to him a kingdom is. His walls are decorated with images of paintings he has acquired by knowledge and love of beauty. His memory is his colporteur library ever at his right hand. His company is distinguished by its Homers and Shakespeares, its Raphaels and Rembrandts, Beethovens and Bachs, Balzacs and Ibsens. He has become a real individual in the world of humanity.

II. The Theory of Culture

II

THE THEORY OF CULTURE

CONFRONTED BY A THEORY

THE present demand for culture in the life of the awakened mind is now adequately realized. The singularity of the cultured person, who is something other than the learned or polite person, has been just as fully recognized. "But," you will protest, "that is more the general spirit of culture than the exact letter, more the advertisement of the commodity than the actual goods of the mind." This must be admitted; further, it may be confessed that, thus far, the nature of culture has been expressed chiefly in a negative form. But if we distinguish genuine culture from its spurious forms, we can proceed to identify it as something in itself, the gold apart from the dross in which it was found.

What is culture in and for itself?

As we have had occasion to note by way of favorable contrast, culture is like charm and humor. All three are general mental states, whose presence we feel, but not always in definable ways. These permanent moods of the happy mind are like the weather of the soul; they are made up of due conditions, but in themselves are not confined to wind or rain or cloud.

Culture is the ineffable charm of the mind, the humor of the human spirit; but in contrast with these it is something that can be more directly approached, more definitely acquired. The first step in the actual acquisition of the culture that is more than knowledge is in the direction of theory.

FAMILIARITY WITH THE FINE

The most salient conception of culture is that of "familiarity with the fine," as we may call it.

Let us introduce this convenient conception, but not urge it, lest it begin to partake of the academic, the pedagogical. There is a sort of familiarity with the fine on the part of the bookseller or art-dealer, yet we are prone to withhold the title of "cultured" from those who merely deal in the things of culture. Culture is really *a fondness for the fine as this springs from an interest in the superior things of life.* We might style it a sort of sympathy for the superior accompanied by an effort to keep the esthetic values of life in the foreground of one's consciousness.

A cultured person is known by his interests as a tree by its fruits.

His eye will behold and rest upon a Doric column even when it graces the front of a bank rather than a temple. That eye will light up at the appearance of a plaster cast of the *Winged Victory* or a print of *Mona Lisa.* The cultured person can be lured away from the colored supplement of his Sunday paper if the rotogravure section reveals a copy of a masterpiece which has been brought into the country. He will tune out of some jazz offering to tune in on a rendition of the *Seventh Symphony*. The daily poem in his paper will not intrigue him if, as has happened, that paper reprints the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. He will prefer a play to a show and seek dramatic entertainment instead of a good laugh. His familiarity with fineness has bred respect for it.

The difficulty that may arise in connection with this interest in the intellectual and beautiful is that of dilettantism. One is not supposed to take mere delight, or *diletto*, in art or science or philosophy, but to enjoy severe pleasures in them. The dilettante philanders with the fine when he should court the cultural.

All of us know how insipid is the person who pretends to take pleasure in the fine arts, or who exaggerates the amount of enjoyment he actually experiences. He gives the impression that he haunts art galleries and opera houses and reads only poetry. A person of this sort will glide gracefully from book to book, from picture to picture, and express a supposed culture in terms of personal enthusiasm instead of calm approval. Such culture is of the gold-leaf variety, pure but extremely thin, and just as difficult to handle. It is a form of affectation which spoils that genuine interest in beauty and truth which makes for genuine culture. When one should be philosophical in the sense of exercising an intellectual love, one tends to become "precious," according to the French use of that term.

CULTURE CONTRASTS

But interest in intellectual things, rather than deep learning or fine manners, is hardly sufficient to express the essential meaning of culture. Then, too, such intellectual and artistic love betrays none of the questions which make culture a problem.

It is in an industrial democracy that culture becomes an acute economic and ethical question. Can we, should we, seek culture and pursue it? This intense question arises the moment the contrasts of culture and common life are appreciated. These are the junctures between interests of *Immediacy* and *Remoteness;* between the ideals of *Conquest* and *Contemplation;* as also in the painful contrast between *Outer Existence* and *Inner Life.*

This is philosophy, but we are ready for it. These are dialectical distinctions, but we can make them. Suppose we begin with the contrast between the Immediate and Remote.

REMOTE AND IMMEDIATE

When this contrast is taken up by science, we know what it means, since we feel the difference and distance between the earth which lies at our feet and a star a hundred or a thousand light-years away. That is merely a matter of measurement, and our mathematics saves us from confusion. In like manner we appreciate the difference between our every-day life with its animal wants and the Kingdom of Heaven, which is not meat and drink. We sense the moral distinction between those two domains.

We are just as alert to life's immediacies and remotenesses when we dwell upon the painful contrast between our actual life and the ideal order of the Good. Our ethics is as enlightening as our mathematics and morality. But the esthetic contrast between the Immediate and Remote, as this appears in culture, is not quite so clear.

We verily know that there is a difference between commerce and culture, and realize how most people decide in favor of the former. Just as fully do we realize that business is not entertainment, which is most often so much relaxation in the life of the "tired business man." We must breathe and bathe, eat and drink, work and sleep. It is not so necessary to think or admire or experience esthetic enthusiasm. The world may not be too much with us, but it is present to a degree which warns us of our immediate wants and the necessity of satisfying them. These want-interests radiate from the center of our being, take on a multitude of forms, and express themselves in the copious catalog of a mail-order house. Needs or utilities, luxuries or comforts—these are the things that press in upon us daily as definite examples of the Immediate.

The domain of the Remote, where our culture will be found, seems quite utopian, a serene cloud which floats far above the concrete landscape. We believe that "where there is no vision the people perish," but are more inclined to rely upon bread as our means of sustenance. We dwell and toil in the world of immediate things and do but gaze or glance at the heaven of remote ideals.

It is this kingdom on high that we cannot annex; we cannot make the stars of culture fight for us in the conquest for our daily bread.

ENLIGHTENMENT AND EFFICIENCY

Then arise, if only in trivial ways, the conflicts of culture-choice. Shall one purchase an automobile or an automatic piano? Shall it be a new hat or a new book? Shall it be tickets for the opera or the equally expensive musical comedy? Yes, this is the conflict between our animal nature and the angel of culture. Are we willing to wage war all through the night, like the Patriarch of Israel, saying, "I will not let thee go until thou bless me"?

When such questions, provoked by the pathetic contrast between interests immediate and remote, arise within the mind of the mature person, their solution is not so difficult. If one has worked long and hard enough to be fairly well off, he may use his acquired leisure for the acquisition of culture, unless the desire for it shall have failed. Or he can manage somehow to reconcile the differences between his interests by devoting a part of the time to action, another part to thought. He may decide to use the day for work, the evening for the self-improvement without which culture is not.

But when it is the youthful mind choosing courses of study in school or college, the contrast between vocational courses and cultural ones is more acute. Shall it be Greek or German, poetry or economics, Latin or stenography? Our fathers took their Greek and Latin, mathematics and metaphysics, and then slipped into a profession. Their children, however, are so situated that they start life in school and choose courses which are concerned with the immediate interests of life, or what is commonly known as making a living.

CRITICS OF CULTURE

It is not only the practical person and the pedagog who warn us against the distraction which cultural pursuits may have for our practical lives; philosophers of a certain sort have done the same thing. Themselves the very products of culture, they have turned against it in favor of the utilitarian life. Rousseau challenged culture on the ground that it distanced man from nature. Only a cultured person could feel that. Voltaire said something to the effect that culture is all very well, "but we must cultivate our garden"—which in all probability he himself never did. Goethe, who tapped the sources of both practical and cultural existence, assumed to believe that man's happiness comes to him when he confines himself to objects of immediate interest. Flaubert and Turgeniev, who saw their culture through the colored glasses of Romanticism, recommended industry as the proper employment of the human mind.

Now, this is a real problem—just as real as the importance of that knowledge which teaches one how to work so as to make his way in the world. When such practical knowledge is absent from the mind, we have the spectacle of the college graduate looking for a job or the talented artist starving in a garret.

It is no wonder, then, that such sages as we have just cited and a host of less eminent but more practical educators should aline themselves against the cultured life as a form of existence out of keeping with the demands of the day. But, in reply to these reproaches, we who are contending for culture have a right to suggest that warning thus sounded amounts to the cry of "Wolf! wolf!" when that beast is far away. There was a danger of culture, perhaps, in the days of Pericles, in the age of the Medici, in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, or in the early Victorian period. But there is no such danger at the present time. As Americans, we are not dominated by the ghost of Emerson as much as by the figure of Edison; or lured by a professor of poetry at Cambridge, Massachusetts, as much as by a maker of autos at Detroit, Michigan. So beset are we by Immediacy that we can afford to run the risk of the culture which introduces the considerations of the Remote.

CONQUEST AND CONTEMPLATION

When our human life splits up into the contrasted halves of Immediate and Remote, the bifurcation invades the brain, where it initiates a similar conflict between *Conquest* and *Contemplation*.

The brain is both motor and sensory, the mind is at once will and intellect, the man is either doer or dreamer. Culture takes its place upon the side of the sensory and intellectual and dreamy. Its offering is taken from the flock whose dreamy shepherd scanned the earth by day, the skies by night; not from the fruit of the soil which his brother tilled by the sweat of his brow. Its children are descended from Mary of Bethany, who sat at the feet of the Teacher, not of Martha cumbered with much serving. Its rewards are ideas, not the thick satisfactions which come from the things of this world. Its total vision is akin to that of the ancient Arabian in his desert, who turned protracted glances toward the skies which, in our skyscraped cities, now hide behind the roofs and stacks of the modern sky-line.

But we would not minimize the importance of Conquest as a human ideal. No, we would say rather that it is so obvious and has received such emphasis from the arts of war and peace that we need say naught in its behalf. Conquest will take care of itself without the fostering and furthering required of its contrasted ideal of contemplation. Industry, like virtue, is its own reward, except that in the case of the industrial the reward is immediate, tangible and agreeable. Conquest will carry itself in response to that incessant urge which springs from the robust will. It is the slender force of the contemplative intellect which requires encouragement, so that it is necessary both to praise culture and to prove that it has an acceptable place in the life of those who are pledged naturally to the more strenuous ideal.

OUTER AND INNER

The third and last conflict engendered by the culture-problem is akin to its forerunners; it is the contrast between *Outer Existence* and *Inner Life.*

Those who take up arms in defense of culture make the attack at this point by asserting that most men live exterior to themselves. They are, as it were, birds who perch and twitter upon the outmost boughs of their true being, but will not settle down and brood in the nest of the soul. Those who neglect the inner life of thought and culture exteriorize themselves by means of work or sport or travel. They feel the forces of exteriority, which draw like yoked exen, but are not so amenable to the influences which would invite them to participate in their ideas or moods or dreams.

If it be said that such brooding would make of us a race of dreamers, we may say in retort that our habitual activities are making of us a race of plodders. When we learn that much of our routine work can be performed by those who are actually morons, we are not so inclined to praise the active life of exteriority as the real exemplification of what we believe lies within us. And since more and more of the world's work is being done by people of low intelligence, if not by robots, it behooves us to heed the notion that the neglected portion of our brain activity might well be expended in some interiorizing way, as in mastering modern science, cultivating modern art, and creating a consciousness of our human existence in a more sincere manner.

WHO, THEN, IS CULTURED?

If, then, culture may be accepted philosophically as *an inner life which contemplates its remote interests*, we may ask, "Who is the cultured person?"

He is not merely the scholar at the university or the gentleman in the drawing-room. He is interested in the best things of life, but does not allow his precious feelings to make a dilettante of him. He realizes that his culture must consist of something different from both erudition and etiquette. If he is somewhat puzzled by the philosophical idea that culture concerns itself with the Contemplation of the Remote, he realizes that his interests are such that he can extend them so as to include things foreign to the daily routine of human existence. He can appreciate his culture as something imported, like a fine fabric or rare perfume, and can understand it as one of Ibsen's characters defined beauty—"something great and far away."

done by people of low intelligence. If not by robots, it [illegible] that the neglected [illegible] of our [illegible] be [illegible] everything [illegible] art, and creates a [illegible] consumed in a most abject manner.

[illegible]

If, then, culture may be [illegible] we may ask, "Who is the cultured person?"

He is [illegible] of the [illegible] in the [illegible] interested [illegible] something [illegible] depends [illegible] Contemplation of the [illegible] processes are such that he [illegible] to include [illegible] human [illegible] as something [illegible] perfume, [illegible] characters [illegible] and far away."

III. Practise of Culture

III

THE PRACTISE OF CULTURE

NO RECIPE FOR CULTURE

NOW we realize what culture is supposed to be and why it is in demand, just as we are now aware of the problems which confront the cultured person. "But," you will say, "this does not apply to me in my case. I want a sort of recipe for culture, not merely a recommendation of its merits. I will accept the theory, provided I may follow it up with practise."

In this you are quite right. One needs instruction in culture-exercise more than an analysis of culture-anatomy. Just as in both science and religion, so in culture, we must become doers of the word we have heard and apply our new knowledge to some definite end. If the means of culture are not placed within our reach, we shall be more wistful than wise about it. Then, too, the book on the subject must be a veritable book, not merely a treatise.

Most cultural works on art, travel and the like are indeed of the recommendatory sort. They advise us to look at fine pictures and beautiful lands. It is as tho the jaunty author were to say, "You ought to see Italy; there's a land for you!" Just as tho he were trying to put into the vernacular Goethe's immortal verse beginning, "Knowest thou that land—*Kennst du das Land?*" "No," you reply, "and what's more I have no idea how I'm going to get there."

How, then, is the culture-journey to be arranged so that we shall behold it as a land, sense the sweetness of its laurel and myrtle, and enjoy the glories of its art and architecture? Can one take lessons in culture, in charm, in humor?

If you want to play the piano, you take lessons on the instrument, for music can be communicated. If you desire to paint, you go to the artist's studio and learn how to draw and color. If it is such an academic thing as French or German you desire, you can join a class, engage a teacher or receive instruction by mail. Pedagogy or the postal service will come to your aid. You are taught and you learn—music, art, language. But there cannot be a similar "course in culture" apart from the arts mentioned. You never dream of studying knowledge or of learning learning. No more should you expect to get culture directly from man or book. The history of culture; yes, but the thing itself is a state of mind, a course of consciousness which you must cultivate within yourself.

However, there is such a thing as instruction in culture, which may be understood for convenience's sake as a species of applied psychology, applied esthetics.

CULTURE AND TASTE

This is in your sense of Taste. You have what may be called your preferential nature or superior order of likes and dislikes. Now, culture is primarily just that—taste, or *sensitivity to the fine and spontaneity to the noble.* In handling your taste-sense, you need instruction, just as in manipulating your muscles you require guidance, training. Athletics and esthetics are one on that point. But you yourself must exercise body and mind in the acquisition of skill and taste, so that nimbleness of body and nobleness of mind shall be yours.

The first thing to do with taste is to recognize that it exists. This will require effort, since many people are inclined to deny that there is a taste-norm. They deny the existence of taste as a standardized frame of mind, since the thing exists, if at all, within the realm of our fluctuating, personal feelings, which do not seem to be subjects of discourse. The intellect can be taught, as is done in the school. The will can be disciplined, as is done in the home and church. But the feelings are like a flock of wild birds which cannot be tamed. It seems as tho culture, in domesticating our natural desires, can do no more than make a caged canary bird of our buoyant and vociferous heart.

LIKING WHAT ONE DOESN'T LIKE

In spite of the unpromising material which is found in our human feelings, it is as possible to train the heart to the Beautiful as to incline the intellect to the True and the will to the Good. But this will involve on your part a radical revision of your habitual attitude. You are prone to say, "I like what I like." In life's minor matters, such as diet, dress and diversions, this may suffice, altho even here your doctor and tailor and golf friend may protest. Your medical adviser will assert that what you do like is spinach. Your tailor will insist that the heart under your coat prefers Oxford gray. Your robust friend will urge that you are wrong when you assert that you are not yet old enough to enjoy golf.

When it comes to cultured taste, you must be prepared to go back on your word even more decidedly.

Yes, repeat your anarchistic formula, but let this be the last time: "I like what I like." Now, take it back and start saying, altho it may be faintly, "I like what I don't like." You are now headed for culture, for your "Don't Likes" include most of the things that go along with the culture-life.

The reason why one must go back on his word and begin to love his old hates and hate his old loves is found in our natural repugnance to emotional standardization. We want to feel free—feel free to like and dislike at will, if it seems to do no harm. We can't rebel in science unless we be advanced mathematicians like Einstein and Eddington. No more can or dare we start anarchy in morals, unless we are as tough as Ibsen and D. H. Lawrence. We won't revolt against the law, unless the Bolsheviki have infected us with their distemper. Our very worst approaches to rebellion consist in reading about relativity, tolerating the idea of trial marriage, and being indulgent toward bootleggers. But we are Bolsheviki of the worst sort when it comes to culture. We are bulls in china shops when beautiful ideals are spread around us, for we like what we like—or we did a moment ago.

This esthetic anarchism is the thing we'll have to quell at the start, altho it can hardly be nipped in the bud, since it is in a fairly blooming condition in America. It shows itself in a certain declaration of esthetic independence, and upon its banners inscribes slogans which say in different languages that tastes are different and independent. Here they are:

De gustibus non est disputandum; der Geschmäck ist verschieden; chacun à son gout.

What they mean is, Let every one rejoice in his own taste; and if there are twenty million ballots to be cast, there are twenty million candidates, since every democrat votes for himself. These linguistic maxims are traditional protests against standardization and show that "regular fellows" will not have regular feelings.

Let's see how they—and we, too,—acquired such anarchy.

ESTHETIC ANARCHY

Much of this temperamentalism may be attributed to the fact that we use the term "taste" in two senses—the esthetic and gastronomic. It serves to express the preferences of the brain and tongue alike. When we fail to make the necessary distinction between Taste and taste, we let our gastronomic preferences bully our artistic ideals. Somehow you like coffee better than tea; prefer beef to mutton, or even lamb; choose pie instead of pudding; take lobster in place of halibut. You assert with much plausibility that you like just those things, and your preference at the dinner table is difficult to dispute. True, your dietetic doctor may insist that you don't like what you do, and tell you your metabolism cries out for the plain dishes of a well-balanced ration; but you can easily convince yourself to the contrary and then ask your doctor to cure your gout and indigestion. Now, that gastric prejudice of yours has made you defiant in the face of connoisseur and critic. But that is not all.

No, you proceed to bolster up your private ideal of beauty, which may be shocking to your artistic friends, by the further assertion that you have a "right" to your tastes. Then your anti-esthetic prejudice is flanked on both sides—by the dietetic and democratic. You forget that you are in the art gallery or opera house and not in the court or Congress. You use the natural sense of human rights—a sort of *jus naturale*, which is supposed to grant you trial by jury, the right to carry arms, and the privilege of considering your house, or flat, your castle—use it in an inappropriately esthetical connection. Thus reinforced by your sense of rights, you feel free to prefer a comic strip to the cartoons of Raphael, and Bud Fisher's pictorial history of "Mutt and Jeff" to Flaxman's drawings of the Hector and Achilles of the *Iliad*. You applaud the jazz of the saxophone, but let your hands lie limp before the harmony, melody and counterpoint of full orchestra. You do these things, you say, because you have a "right" to your taste.

Confusion again, and worse confounded! You are mixing matters badly. Your revolutionary sense of rights, couched in the flaming spirit of '76, has led you astray.

You do have the right to look at the crude sketch if you prefer it to a mezzotint, to read the "snappy" story if it appeals to you in ways that the classic tale cannot, and to purchase a ticket to comic opera instead of grand. But you do not have the right to call these crudities things of beauty. You have something more to do than escape the eye of the censor and keep clear of the Watch and Ward Society. You have to meet the censor and watching warden of your own esthetic conscience. When, in your esthetic assertion of your rights, you say, "Every one to his taste," you may feel that you are affirming your individuality. But when your neighbor says it to you of you, it signifies insult.

If you go so far as to advance your temperamental "tastes" in the form of constitutional rights, you may be setting up what the psychoanalysts call your "defense mechanism." That involves all that dubious and disagreeable business of inferiority and superiority complexes, if not glands. What we mean, however, is simply this—that you are shielding your poor taste behind a gastronomic and juristic barricade; or taking refuge in your stomach and citizenship. You are quick to judge; you shoot before the artist can even take aim. You whip out your preliminary and prejudicial criticism before he can so much as present his program.

THE CASE OF BEETHOVEN

Suppose it is a case of Beethoven, and your friend, a music-lover, has invited you to "enjoy" the music from his box. It is to be the *Ninth Symphony*, primarily, and you realize that there is trouble in store for you, since *Ninth Symphonies* are not easy on the ear of the non-musical. Instead of declining the invitation for a reason good or with an excuse sufficient, you go—and set up your defense mechanism while the musicians are tuning up their instruments. Instead of suffering in silence, with the realization that the concert hall is largely a sort of hospital ward full of such patients, you employ the respite between the *andante* and *scherzo* to vouchsafe the suggestion that you prefer Irving Berlin to Ludwig van Beethoven.

That is bad enough, but can be made even worse. You know how that is done. You have gone so far now in the case of Beethoven vs. yourself that you have nothing more to lose; hence you take a stand equal in fortitude to that of Leonidas in the pass, and say, "I don't know anything about classic music, but I know what I like!"

That's the worst error you could make under the circumstances. It's quite the other way. You know ten times as much about classic music as you know about your musical likes, and a hundred times more about Beethoven than about your own brain as an organ of musical appreciation. You know more about Beethoven and the classical than you know about yourself and the personal, because, if for no other reason, there is so much more to be known. Beethoven's classicism can be and is formulated in a knowable way; your temperamentalism cannot be and hence has not been. Your innocence of music is far worse than his guilt.

DO WE WANT WHAT WE WANT?

Or you may fancy that you are thrilled by such a story as *Ex-Wife*, when in truth you are much more enthusiastic over such an ex-wife as Madame Bovary, whose lurid loves were related in such sumptuous style by the great Flaubert; so lurid the love and so sumptuous the style that its author soon found himself in a law court. Or it may be that you hear a voice calling out to you to read such a book as *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* when the voice is really broadcasting *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the story of a modern maid who lived and died for love in old Lear land.

It's the same difference of opinion, or difference between opinion and view, in matters of the stage. You think you prefer such a play as *Strictly Dishonorable* when in truth your interests are elicited by a performance of *Hedda Gabler*. What you think you like indicates a state of mind as yet unformulated and unknown. In comparison with this nebulous nothing your knowledge of what is classic is infinitely greater.

You may protest at this, and add that our acid test is distinctly disagreeable. Then you may go on to aver that, since taste is a matter of feeling, your private house of pleasure is your artistic castle. Without attempting to dislodge the person who takes his stand upon his feelings, it must be said that he will have to come out of his hiding if he is to take his place in the world of culture. It is undeniable that he is not required to have the austere taste of the critic or the keen sense of the connoisseur, but his esthetics must be something other than whim. If he will attain to the standard of an amateur, he may be excused for not becoming a professional in the matter of culture.

Then, likewise, one who has rationalized his emotions to a certain degree of standardization may still be allowed certain kinds of personal preference. One can love an art without being legally wedded to it, and it is intellectual love which is paramount. We may well admit that tastes do differ, provided we make the difference one of degree, not of kind.

The instrument of taste is a thermometer, not a barometer. It records changes in the temperature of the air by means of numbers all the way from zero to the boiling point. The barometer pretends to tell us about different kinds of weather, which is too much to expect in the culture of the fine arts. Our tastes move up and down the thermometric scale in accordance with the impression made upon the mercury. If we can feel enough of the music and poetry to keep above zero—or perhaps the freezing point—we can afford to let the ecstatic music-lover and connoisseur of the arts revel at his boiling point. But we must accede to the idea that our private taste is only a certain proportion of the perfection which goes along with his professional one. Every man to his own degree of taste, with the hope that he will warm up to something higher, better; to something "fair and warmer."

SELECTING TYPES

Do not feel that you are beyond your depth in the fine arts or speculative theories. You can swim when the water is "over your head," or would be were you to sink. You have a right to be cheered by the further news that taste-differences are quite proper and that we are not supposed to be standardized unto monotony. But these differences are of a typical rather than a temperamental order. You must not follow your whims, but choose among the types. One may be such a classicist as to praise Racine and detest Victor Hugo, and vice versa. He may devote himself to Bach and be deaf to Strauss; may open eyes of wonder at Raphael and be blind to the more vigorous art of Rembrandt, just as he may vow allegiance to Dickens and abhor Dostoievsky. In matters Lowell, he may prefer James Russell to Amy, and, in spite of the "Chicago school" of poetry, gain some cultural nourishment from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. It's largely a matter of choosing types, as in this country it's a matter of choosing parties. Only now and then does one have a chance to flash forth into something really original.

As a matter of personal culture, each of us must become acquainted both with himself and with the artists to whom we look for esthetic inspiration and food. We acquire culture via taste the way we acquire good digestion, skill at bridge or a low score on the links. You know how you feel, what cards you play and what your score is. You can come to learn what you like. But you must rationalize your feelings and prize taste as highly as sophistication. The impedimenta of culture are at hand in the form of books, pictures or prints, and tickets to theater and opera. Let these be your gymnastic appliances or calisthenic forms. Then you will begin to know your heart as well as your doctor does when he applies the stethoscope. You will know what your heart does like.

WHERE DO WE STAND NOW?

Now let's see where we stand in this culture program. We haven't let anybody inflict upon us a verbal definition of dubious value; no, we have simply identified culture with taste which can be felt. It went against the grain to yield private preference for the sake of standardized, classicized taste, but a cultured person is ever willing to make the sacrifice. Those who appeared to assert their whims in opposition to standards were not really taking such a rebellious stand. No, they were only holding back from culture like crude boys and timid girls invited to a party.

We are now prepared to participate in culture and are ready to reap its harvests.

The new life of culture, which comes about after this *volte-face*, might mean all sorts of strange things—classical archeology, Italian primitives, Beowulf, basilicas, old Catalan, Dutch and Flemish genre, baroque and Browning; but it need not. It means only a certain intelligent sympathy for the five fine arts—architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, music. Among these, certain choices may be made, as painting and poetry, or music and architecture. One may select a field likely for him and come to an understanding with it.

When one realizes that his mind is meant to be a living organ of appreciation rather than a museum, he will not worry because he is weak on mosaics or stained glass or Gothic. His only concern is really a subjective one; is he in the right frame of mind to enjoy an intelligent outlook upon the world of beauty? Is he as careful with his taste as with his diet, and does he watch his interest the way he is supposed to watch his habits?

IV. Culture and Pleasure

IV

CULTURE AND PLEASURE

BAD TASTE

IT would sound strange indeed if a man were to be condemned on the ground that he had no esthetic character, since character is something that has been pretty thoroughly absorbed by morality. However, it can hardly be denied that there is such a thing as goodness based upon taste, just as it must be admitted that there is a kind of condemnation reserved for those who lack fineness of feeling. It is only because our social life has found it necessary to lay its emphases upon knowing and doing that there is no such thing as an esthetical imperative, or *duty to desire the best things in nature and human life*. Now, it is this quasi-duty that we propose to recognize as the force which will cultivate taste by the production of proper feelings.

The culture-logic, if such it can be called, runs like this: culture means taste, taste beauty, beauty pleasure.

The esthetic pleasure of the cultured person means just so much feeling and really knowing what one likes. There can be no exact science of the thing, like geometry, since science is not art. But both geometry and esthetics exist in the world of space, where there may be a sort of fourth dimension for each of them. You are dealing with your feelings and let personal preference have something to say, but you keep culture in mind and hold it in reserve by way of possible reinforcement. You do this daily in other matters, as business and politics, so why not in art and taste and culture? You may not fancy your customer or candidate, but you do business with or cast a vote for him. Can you not be as impersonal with author and artist?

WAR ON WHIMS

In social matters, you have your prejudices and preferences, but you let politeness mask and modify these whims. Suppose, to exemplify this point, one has definite or stubborn ideals of feminine beauty, whose peculiarities his boyhood, or Freud, must explain. As the result of this state of affairs with him, he prefers the blonde to the brunette. Nevertheless, one's sense of taste, to say nothing of one's tact, leads him to see a kind of beauty in the darker type also. Pulchritudinous justice must be done tho the heavens fall, and the man who is sweetly confronted by opposed types of beauty must be as well balanced as a judge in Washington or Atlantic City, in the Supreme Court or the Beauty Contest. When such a judicial attitude is assumed, one is in the esthetic attitude, and only then.

One cannot have an esthetic pleasure which is all his own, but must enjoy a satisfaction of the entire personality, philosophical as well as temperamental. All that one has at his disposal, in the act of deciding between beauty and ugliness, is a set of natural feelings, pleasures and pains, likes and dislikes. Out of these he must elaborate the superior feelings which will be able to serve him in the operation of taste or true preference.

His must be the delight of aristocrats when they open their doors and spread their boards to entertain imported princes. Such titled ones are veritably bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; they stride in, sit down and eat like the rest of us, but they seem different. So must seem your cultured feelings when you extend your royal welcome to the arts. Of the same bone and flesh as your common likes and dislikes, they must and can take on the character of exceptional emotions, so that you shall entertain princes and angels unawares.

PRODUCED FEELINGS

"But," you will ask, "how am I to obtain these finer feelings so requisite for entertaining Sophocles and Shakespeare, Byron and the Brownings?"

The answer is, you'll have to manufacture them according to your esthetic pattern. You have the usual set of emotional reactions common to the course of nature and the routine of daily life. These are the feelings of the common or garden variety, which with liberal but careless hand Dame Nature has dropped into your lap. But there are other feelings already implicit and potential in these pleasures. They fall not of themselves from the trees where they have ripened in the indulgent sunshine of nature. No, the ground of their growth must be tilled, the trees pruned, the fruit shaken down from the boughs and garnered. In a word, the proper feeling for taste is a produced feeling.

You are already in possession of such produced feelings in the form of loves—love of country, love of virtue, love of mate. To your patriotic, moral and erotic emotions you can add esthetic ones. These you cannot, need not, create out of nothing or manufacture out of whole cloth. You need only elaborate and intensify a given feeling and the cultural result will follow.

In the feeling of patriotism, the average person has a psychic mass or complex he has manufactured out of certain instincts, traditions, circumstances. The waving of a flag can set these all aflame. One need not be chauvinist or jingoist to warm up at that fire. Perhaps one's patriotic emotions do not flash out the way they did when he was making the world safe for democracy. No longer is there the piping call of fife or rattle of drum to beat the feeling into froth, but it is still there. One-hundred-per-cent Americanism may be below par, but the patriot is far from being bankrupt. But whether the nationalist consciousness is active or passive, it is ever present and lends credence to the notion that our best feelings are the ones we make for ourselves.

One's ability to engender feelings and throw them into the blood like so much adrenaline is further evinced by his ethical enthusiasm. Every one has the inherent power to stir up the embers of conscience and have them blaze upon the private hearth. Of course, we don't expect as much of our ethical enthusiasm as we do of our patriotic pride, but at times we have been made aware of the fierceness with which the stolid moral nature may flash out and flame. Most often, perhaps, the conflagration occurs in a case of wrong-doing on the part of others, as when Turks massacre Armenians, Bolsheviki burn churches, and gangsters terrorize towns. Less frequently do we feel such moral indignation toward ourselves. St. Augustine did, however, and so did St. Francis; but saints would do that. Still, there is also the case of Ibsen in his rather confessional plays; and Strindberg, too. Ay, we ourselves know our own power to produce such moral feelings in personal and painful ways, just as we know how to produce exhaustion by overexercise, so that the manufacture of morality is no surprize to us.

ENGENDERING LOVE

But it is not within the larger and more objective realms of the political and moral alone that the production of feelings goes on. We indulge it in connection with the personal affairs of private life, as in the experience of "falling in love." This is an art less difficult to acquire than that of blank verse and counterpoint, but it is none the less an art, and one which we practise on ourselves. It depends upon the man's ability to summon from the depths of his infinite nature such ideals of womanhood as he would attach to some particular object which has appealed to him; such ideals and more, too. This is love. It is the art of producing unheard-of, undreamed-of feelings. And this is how it works:

At the outset, the man has within him the ideal of the Eternal Feminine, no matter where or how he got it. Let Shakespeare and Goethe, or Freud and Jung, explain it. Now, when this ripening Romeo, or Falstaff, is fully exposed to the Appeal, he turns back into his private heart like a man who rushes back into the house for the bunch of keys he has forgotten. From the inward depths of his manhood's dwelling he now fares forth all laden with ideals in huge bundles—the beauty of Helen and Hecuba, the charm of Juliet and Rosalind, the lure of Manon Lescaut and Ninon de L'Enclos, along with the less august but no less influential ideals supplied, perhaps, by the stage. He deliberately, but not so consciously, wills that all these graces and charms and lures shall attach to the woman of his present choice. Stendhal knew that, and so does every man.

Love is the will-to-love, a produced feeling which can serve the purpose of a fine art, for a while.

THE PRODUCTION OF CULTURE

If, now, in matters patriotic, moral and erotic, we are capable of conjuring up within us appropriate emotions as the occasion may demand, we are none the less able to summon from the same personal depth the emotion esthetic. We learn to take an interest in the beautiful in art or we interest ourselves in matters pertaining to culture. Just as we cultivate a taste for olives and cigarets, for caviar and ravioli, so we can, and do, cultivate a taste for chiaroscuro and counterpoint, for dactyls and the tondos of Botticelli. They sound appetizing and alluring, do they not? Then why should we make wry faces over them and be any more disagreeable at opera than at a banquet? Why not try the system of auto-affirmation of the late M. Coué, and thus say, "I'm more cultured every day, in every way"? This is indeed what we must do if we are to get ourselves into the right frame of mind, culturally speaking.

But, how about results as we feel our way around in the City of Culture? Are we getting anywhere, or is this just so much sightseeing? Of course, we dare not look for too much actuality in our dealings with such intangible, imponderable stuff as culture. No, we'll just imagine that it's a sort of intellectual Wall Street where one can be satisfied with paper profits as he looks at the bid-and-asked prices of "Culture Preferred." But still you have a right to expect results of some sort. If you take exercise, you feel better and do better by your pillow and your plate. If you read wisely and listen in properly when there is music on the air, your feelings register results of some sort and degree. If you have followed culture you achieve actual results in the form of permanent pleasure. The Greeks had a word for it: they called it a possession forever—

ktema es aei. The poet and philosopher have celebrated this thing, and we'll turn to Keats and Kant for corroborations.

PERMANENT PLEASURES

When we turn to the poetry of Keats and open his work at *Endymion*, the very first line yields a cultural profit—"A thing of beauty is a joy forever." We know that a thing of pleasure is not. You cannot eat your cake and have it, for pastry and the pleasure thereof vanish at the same moment. But a poem written with power and read in earnest keeps resounding in the mind. A painting executed with sincere brush and examined with esthetic care etches its beauty upon the walls of memory. So, likewise, a sonata which has unfolded its theme to an appreciative ear; its music abides as an echoing memory sweet. After one has fed his mind on such manna, he is in possession of a pleasure pure and undefiled and that fadeth not away. Keats poetized about this permanent joy the way Kant had previously philosophized.

Kant was a severe rationalist and moralist, but the substantial nature of the beautiful was not beneath his notice. He had to deal with it in a deep, dialectical way, but his meaning is manifest in spite of his metaphysics. What Kant did to pleasure was to cast out self-interest as Keats cast out time. With both of them, beauty became a disinterested, abiding satisfaction. They knew that we human beings have a concrete interest in those pleasures which deal with food and drink, since the organism requires nourishment and the brain must be alive to our animal needs. They knew, as we know, that there are the more robust pleasures of the senses, due to the biological fact that our instincts are in league with life and pledged to its perpetuation. By means of such poetical and philosophical reasoning, we can proceed to the point where we can recognize as well the remote interests whose cultivation, as in science and art, place us in the disinterested attitude so desirable for culture.

PLEASURE MINUS INTEREST

If we are by nature desiderative, we can become disinterested. We achieve such a contemplative state of mind by means of art and esthetics, the outer and inner forms of culture. If we cannot wholly eliminate self-interest, we can expurgate it so that it shall appear in an acceptable form. One can enjoy the color and form of a rosy apple apart from the stark pleasure enjoyed in the act of eating it. A basket of fruit upon a dining-table can serve the appointments of the feast as well as a vase filled with flowers. Or one can gain a certain kind of satisfaction from a picture of just such a fruit-basket, altho this form of decoration in a dining-room is often for the purpose of stimulating appetite. But in such cases, we can make the distinction between the interest immediate and sensuous and the interest remote and spiritual. In the more serious concerns of life, it is sometimes convenient to distinguish between the "lust of the eyes" and the "lust of the flesh," even when the moral values involved may not be so distinct.

The result of such discrimination should be to establish the metaphysical if not mathematical ideal of "pleasure minus interest." It may be poor psychology in that it indicates a kind of impossible mental state and may be just as poor as a culture dogma. But it is certainly instructive and can serve as an esthetic device for the appreciation of beauty when it may not so fully operate as an artistic doctrine.

Of course, it is a chilly notion which Kant would implant within our mortal minds. He would appear to be legislating for ideal creatures like the *Venus de Milo* and the *Apollo Belvedere*, not for the average person with his normal tendencies. Then, too, we have a right to feel that this ideal could serve us in a museum of chill, chaste statues or a gallery of still-life paintings. But when other arts, like music and poetry, offer their entertainments, one feels the need of some more turbulent conception of the beautiful.

PLEASURE PLUS INTEREST

The tranquil conception of beauty could not and did not go unchallenged. It met vigorous opposition in Stendhal and Nietzsche, and resulted in a competitive criterion in the form of beauty as a "promise of pleasure." If we consider Kant and Stendhal arithmeticians instead of esthetes, we may say that Kant arrived at beauty by placing the minus sign after pleasure, while Stendhal thought it more fitting to use the plus. This esthetic algebra is bound to appear puzzling and provoking until we realize what these thinkers were driving at. One wanted the cultural state of mind to be cool and tranquil, the other emphasized the warm and turbulent. Let Stendhal dictate our desires and we shall have esthetics in earnest, or real feelings. In the hands of Kant, the result will be something which any one's sense of humor can discover, for it will amount to anesthetics.

In order that this significant distinction may be fully appreciated, it may be well to avail ourselves of a change of venue and thus take up the question in the Court of Love. This can be done by citing examples of contrasted lovers who will reveal the disinterested devotion to an ideal or downright love for an actual object of desire. Of the latter there is no lack, since life and literature are witness to the fond and age-old struggle 'twixt woman and man. The names of those who have loved is legion, yet there are splendid examples of those with whom love was an art. They should reveal the possibilities of that disinterested desire which the cool philosopher praised so unreservedly.

THE CASE OF DANTE AND PETRARCH

The relation between the esthetic and erotic, which in crude psychology means that art is based upon sex, appears eminently in the poetic passions of Dante and Petrarch. In Dante's case, the most trivial friendship on the part of Beatrice was sufficient to enkindle a holy fire in whose light the grim bard wrote the first modern poem—*The Divine Comedy*. Pathetic was the spiritual distance between the poet and his flame, fine the fascination, disinterested his desire for her. Just how this noble Florentine woman could divine the poet's passion from a poem on theology and politics it is difficult to determine, except as he places her in his paradise and makes fairly liberal use of her name. The chief thing to observe, however, is that a human lover could resort to such a mode of expressing the mood Beatrice had engendered in him. But it was a love esthetical and intellectual, not faunal or capricious. In it we find a vivid exemplification of the esthetic ideal of detached desire for and impersonal pleasure in a remote object thought of as beautiful. It was love in the sense of *amor intellectualis*.

The same blue flame sprang up later in the heart of Petrarch, the first modern man. His Laura worked upon his imagination in a manner just as distant and chilling. It is true that Petrarch, who wrote sonnets to his lady love, was more personal in his form of expression; but his actual acquaintance with the object of his inspiration was even more slender than that which Dante enjoyed with Beatrice. As erotic exhibits, these sonnets contain little or perhaps nothing of interest to the modern psychologist who is ever in search of something naturalistic if not pathological; but as esthetic documents the inspired stanzas are of value in embodying the idea before us —pleasure minus self-interest or remote desire; something quite alien to any Freudian wish.

LEONARDO AND RAPHAEL

In order to set the above ideals of art-love in clear relief, if not for the purpose of showing how human can be the love of the artist-heart, we may cite the contrasted passions of another pair of Italian lover-artists—Leonardo and Raphael. Their art was no less authentic, their minds no whit inferior, but their loves were of the more usual kind. In Leonardo's case, the inspiration received from La Gioconda, whose features are now immortalized in the picture of *Mona Lisa*, the esthetic inspiration was none the less a matter of erotic interest. The painter was both artist and man; his love was both intellectual and faunal. The same was true of Raphael and La Fornarina, the model who, outside the studio, was his sweetheart and, incidentally, the baker's wife!

DRAMATIC EXAMPLES OF LOVE

Who were the lovers in these sublime cases, the chaste poets or the ardent painters? Whose was the artistic attitude? In considering such parallel queries, it may be well to note two similar instances, which, however, are taken from literature instead of life. The first shall be that of Botticelli. In the story, *Quattrocentistaria*, which Maurice Hewlett tells, the beautiful Simonetta was willing to pose in all frankness as the model for *The Birth of Venus*. But when the last stroke of the brush, which had placed her fairness upon the canvas, was laid on, the artist arose from behind his easel and said, "Maiden, I love thee!" Such was the dismay of the maid who found herself an object of love and not beauty only, that, according to the tale, she died.

Quite at variance with this fatal idealism is the robust realism which Ibsen portrays in *When We Dead Awaken*. Here, the beautiful Irene had posed patiently for the sculptor's masterpiece, *The Resurrection Day*. But with the last stroke of the mallet upon the marble which had taken on the fairness of the woman's form, all that the sculptor could do was to take her hand and say, "This has been a priceless episode for me." It was, as the model said afterwards in marked contempt, "the work of art first and then the human being."

Suppose, now, we assort these objects of art-love into their respective groups—Beatrice, Laura, Simonetta here, La Gioconda, La Fornarina, Irene there; to what conclusion shall we come?

If the interest is that of romance, the three objects of ardent inspiration are bound to be victorious; but if the idea is an esthetical one, the more sublimated, spiritual women will have to triumph. Then we are back at the beginning, when the original question was asked—shall the esthetic attitude of the cultured person be one of pleasure plus interest, something desiderative and esthetic, or rather that of pleasure minus interest, something disinterested and anesthetic? It may turn out that there is a way of combining these contrasts so that art shall feel love and love find art in a fuller form of human consciousness. This problem will have to be taken up under the heading of "Relaxation and Release."

V. Relaxation and Release

V

RELAXATION AND RELEASE

A LITTLE PSYCHOLOGY

WE must not get too deeply into modern psychology, but we would like to use a little of it to explain the strange and happy hold that culture has upon the human mind. We acquire certain kinds of knowledge for the sake of the facts of the matter or because we believe the knowledge will prove useful. But there are certain ideas that we work out and entertain because of the way they minister to our emotions. We feel better when we recall something from Shakespeare, have a fleeting vision of a Rembrandt portrait, or hum an aria from Verdi. We know not why it is, but these little drafts of culture are refreshing.

Of course, we cannot pin our emotions down like butterflies to a board and study their wings. Our emotions must fly or go out of existence. But if we are going to visit libraries and galleries and opera houses for the sake of acquiring emotions, it may be well to ask what effect these evanescent things are going to have upon us. The question, which injected itself into the discussion when we were talking about "Culture and Pleasure," is just this: Are our feelings supposed to be positive or negative? Will our esthetic moods turn out to be turbulent or tranquil? Does esthetic culture tend to make us relax or does it release within something that then assumes a positive, aggressive character?

The psychology of the situation is paradoxical. We seem to blow hot and blow cold at the same time. The beauty of art arouses us, but seems to have a subduing effect at the same time. Evidently when we relax one part of our nature we release another. We might make note of the fact that beauty makes a tremendous impression upon us, and then stop thinking about it. But we are naturally curious to find out how beauty impresses us. We have seen already that beauty produces a pleasure which is above all sensuous pleasures, but that is not all. It seems to release something within us, or it emancipates us from ourselves, so that for the time being we are free. If it were not because of something like this, there would be no permanent interest in art or culture.

HOW THE STIMULANT WORKS

The paradox of our being subdued and aroused at the same time creates a strange situation, which can be illustrated clearly, but not so happily, by the analogy of alcohol and its effect upon the nervous system. No matter what one thinks he gets out of the wine cup, the chemist will assure him that the effect of the alcohol is negative and narcotic. It subtracts from and does not add to the things that go to make up life. The stimulant can arouse one part of a man's nature only after it has subdued another. It seems to remove the brakes which are ever at work—checking the individual's progress. It removes the sense of restraint and lets the man come forth freely and as freely speak out. This seems to be the origin of the expression, "There's truth in wine—*In vino veritas*."

The inward truth about one's nature and the private matter of the heart now fare forth into freedom. The potion has rendered reason null and made discretion void. Its effect has been to arouse something within by subduing something else without. It is as tho the brakes upon the baser part of one's nature had been removed and now the vehicle of personality runs freely according to the gravitational force of one's own nature. That coldness which is peculiar to human reason and social reserve has been removed with the effect of engendering warmth. In such a glow the figures of one's personal equation have changed signs from minus to plus.

THE WINE OF BEAUTY

The wine of beauty operates in a similar manner. It begins by beguiling us from the common, coarser effects of life, and engendering the new and inward life of that which we fain would be. Under the intoxication of art, the good genius of the individual is set free and begins to stalk about majestically.

All the fine arts work this miracle in their own ways and respective degrees, but it is in the art of music that the effect of the release is most definite, most decisive. Once within the soundproof walls of concert hall or opera house, we are rendered impervious to the common clamor of the street. But not only is there this physical separation from the strident things of this world; there is as much the expulsive power of the music, which, like the tones of Jason's lyre, makes one deaf to the sensuous voices of the sirens. Hence, when one listens to Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* or Wagner's *Valkyries*, there is somewhat more than the direct appreciation of classic and romantic music. There is the inward release of one's own inarticulate musical genius.

To step into an art gallery is to experience similar but less spectacular emancipation from the common sights of city life. These themselves may be implicit with esthetic possibilities, so that it needs only the artist's eye and artist's touch to transform rough surfaces and distorted shadows into works of art. But as these things are experienced by us in the form of streets for traffic and buildings for occupancy, they produce inartistic confusion often worse confounded.

Our interest in these solid objects is immediate and practical, for we travel these streets and enter these buildings. When, however, they are reduced to pictorial size and form we are able to relax our hold upon them and experience the release, the sense of appreciation in which the esthetic enjoyment of the cultured person is found. Let any one observe the inward action of his mind when he perceives the effect of good drawing and careful coloring, and he will appreciate the manner in which the tranquil art of painting can subdue the exterior part of his mind with the result of emancipating the interior.

Like music, the art of poetry becomes an effective means of spiritual liberation. Our natural tendency is to treat poetry as a sort of luxury to be enjoyed in hours of idleness. We associate a volume of verse with an easy chair by the fireside in winter or a hammock on a porch in summer. We summon our bards when we wish to enjoy relaxation. Nevertheless, the real function of poetry is as positive and potent as that of music or painting.

The poet must be our liberator. His lines must lure us from the common sounds of noisy civilization, whose implicit music is only broken cadences, whose hum is a poem we cannot fully comprehend. These broken verses he must mend, as did Homer and Vergil when they sang of war; as do our minor modern poets when they chant the song of city life.

Never mind the special and technical method which our poet may employ; for he is now, as we might express it, a nerve specialist whose office it is to calm the spirit so badly ruffled by contemporary civilization. An indication of this curative effect is to be found in the daily poem which now has its place in the papers alongside the frightful news of the day.

ESTHETIC RELAXATION

The various releases which come from cultured relaxation can now be summarized, if only in an abstract manner. They are the emancipation from time and space, matter and motion, society and self. When we gaze at paintings, read poems, witness plays, or attend concerts, we may imagine we are enjoying only special, sudden forms of entertainment. But when we view our arts in the light of the cultured life, we realize that they can work a more perfect miracle within us. Their calculated effect is to take us out of ourselves and our worlds.

PHYSICAL RELEASE

As creatures of earth, we find ourselves in the actual world which Emerson styled "the painful kingdom of time and place, where dwell care and canker and fear." Now, if we were of a sudden translated from the space-time order into a celestial one, we should be better off, but should no longer rejoice in human existence. Hence, we appeal to art and culture to release us from these finite walls in a symbolic manner only, or by way of vacation. Art does this by introducing its own space, as in the perspective of painting; its own time, as in music and poetry. We do not take the wings of a bird to fly away and be at rest. No, we enjoy "short swallow flights of song" wherein the cadence of poetry takes the place of hours by the clock. or where the idealized scenes on canvases are substituted for the drab display of the exterior world. It is, as it were, a homeopathic method of treating our fever—small doses of the thing that afflicts us.

Much the same may be said of our release from the domain of matter and motion, as we are ruled by this in an age of materialism and machinery. We cannot drop the robe of flesh and begin to participate in the life of angels, but we may be able to minimize the effect of the materials which form the ingredients of the physical world. We do this, or let the artist do this for us, when we enjoy the slight suggestions of matter which come from a painted canvas; when we experience motion the way it is presented to us with the refinement of music. We are still human and our physical world is still with us, but we are emancipated from its usual influence. Our cultured relaxation at opera or art-exhibit has brought about our release.

SOCIAL RELEASE

The social order is no less oppressive than the physical one. It is not merely that we are jostled by the crowd; we are oppressed by its laws and conventions. We have to choose between anarchy and art, which have something in common. If we adopt radical procedure, we set ourselves in opposition to the established order, which we propose to demolish. This will result in the establishing of another such order, which may make the last state worse than the first; but no matter now.

The artistic mode of social release is found in the enjoyment of plays and romances, where the characters live their own tragic or comic lives and take the esthetic consequences. Our interest in these Hamlets and Hedda Gablers, in these Rastignacs and Becky Sharps, lies in the fact that they carry on in splendid disobedience to the dictates of that social order which we find so stale and oppressive. We may applaud the style of the author and the thrill of the tale as such, but it's the astonishing freedom of these characters which affords the final appeal. They sin and suffer for us; we sin and suffer with them in a spiritual sympathy which is the very life of all literary art.

Culture is individualistic to the extreme of egoism, yet it has the effect of delivering one from the toils of his every-day ego. The individualism of the nineteenth century, which is still with us, is testimony to that point. Stendhal, Wagner, Ibsen, Dostoievsky, Strindberg, Hauptmann and Sudermann are all witnesses of that. Such individualists write in behalf of the person who feels that he is not himself but fain would be. The method recommended is that of culture.

"Am I that which is within me?" asked Stirner. "No, I am no more my own heart than I am my sweetheart."

When one feels such personal bankruptcy, his tendency is to obtain wealth or recoup the lost fortune. His medium is that of culture. He will use his culture to put off the old man and put on the new. He will realize, and that painfully, that in his ordinary life he has not been himself, but only a merchant or doctor or teacher. Then he will resolve to find and fashion himself according to this new pattern—that of culture. Once this stand is taken, he is released from the social self in the mundane order of time and space.

THE INFINITE DEMOCRAT

The released person, the one who has cultivated the garden of his soul, is now in the condition which Carlyle indicated by the phrase, "The Infinite Shoeblack," which became the title of a Broadway play. The Carlylean idea was that so deep is the human demand for happiness that no plenitude of world pleasures can ever satisfy the human heart when it is taken in a transcendental sense. However, it is something like this satisfaction which culture aspires to furnish, if only in a way and for the time being. This is by means of what we have been calling the "releases," whereby what reposes implicitly within one may exemplify itself in freedom from the actual order of nature and society.

Of course, the mathematical symbols of "finite" and "infinite" seem somewhat out of place in esthetic discourse, and are appealed to only for the sake of vivid effect in minds accustomed to the smallness of things on earth and their magnitude in the skies. What the idea really amounts to is that there is within every one of us an Infinite Individul of some sort, be it "Infinite Business Man" or "Infinite Democrat."

This infinite, or unique, quality, which is barely touched by the affairs of average life, is the thing that art aims at in one way or another. Kant's idea of disinterested pleasure, while fraught with doubtful psychology, is a good, clear way of suggesting our inward capacity for endless enjoyment in the beautiful things of culture. Croce's ideal of art as expression is another approximation to the same indefinable but felt situation within the mind of every person who really lives. The notion of release through relaxation is only a suggestion of the way in which this "infinite" condition can be realized.

THE FREEDOM OF CULTURE

When we really know our arts, we recognize them as means to the spiritual end of liberating the real person within us. When we appreciate our culture, we realize the fact that it, too, is a modus of setting us apart from common desire in order that we may entertain and exercise the idea of the desirable.

The Buddhist, who has come to the realization that desire for life is the curse of life, proceeds to extirpate it by means of ascetic exercise. But those who wish to be less radical even tho they have to be less spiritual will find it more convenient to adopt a course of culture instead of ascetic mysticism. They will still live and love, but they will suffer their culture so to cleanse the inward parts as to render life and love authentic and of permanent satisfaction.

The food of culture is art. We may talk about it as a state of mind and try to improve it by means of taste, but beauty needs the nourishment which only the fine arts can supply.

We may feel that we are narrowing culture down to a fine point when we make it something purely esthetical, since there is such a thing as historical culture or scientific culture. But the trouble with history and science as forms of culture is that they involve so many other interests. History branches out into the political and economic; science ranges over the whole universe, and where it touches human life it settles down to the industrial. Hence it is wise to follow the path of culture with art as our guide.

CULTURE AND ART

Art is preferred because it is practically nothing but a cultural pursuit. It may involve other considerations—the actual livelihood of the artist, the stimulation of patriotic feeling in the case of mural decorations and statuary in public buildings, as well as religious feelings associated with ecclesiastical art. But the direct aim of art is toward man as a cultured being. It aspires to arouse and nourish taste. Its field is that of beauty viewed under ever so many different forms, hence it is well to lean upon the solidified sense of beauty found in art rather than to roam abroad and try to acquire culture in a miscellaneous manner.

After one's sense of culture has been developed and deepened, he can afford to exercise it extensively in connection with almost anything that pertains to human life in the world. But the problem of cultivating cultural taste is one which is best solved by keeping close to the fine arts. They give us the quintessence of culture, which can be diluted later on.

In coming to an understanding with art as a means to culture, it will be well for us to examine the general nature of solidified beauty in the form of art theory, and then observe how this is exemplified in certain of the arts themselves.

VI. The Nature of Art

VI

THE NATURE OF ART

THREE ESTHETIC STANDARDS

WHEN art is looked upon in a cursory manner, it appears to be a superior method of producing the beauty which is discernible in the five fine arts themselves. It may turn out that art is not so fully pledged to the idea of the beautiful, but for the time being art and beauty may be regarded as well-nigh identical. When the idea of art is thus held in the mind, altho loosely, it will be valuable to theorize about its nature in order that its essence may be more fully appreciated.

Definitions and theories of art are various, but it will be sufficient to consider them in the form of the classic theory of Imitation, the romantic ideal of Art as Play, and the realistic notion of Art as Expression. These should serve to show that there are standards of beauty and genuine conceptions of art.

It is natural to think of art as the imitation of nature and expect it to yield a fairly accurate representation of familiar objects. Other forms of human culture generally have departed from the immediate impression of nature, so that the formulas of science, beliefs of religion, and principles of morals are at least once removed from their source. They may suggest something in the natural world, but they are more derivative than direct representations of it. Art is still upon its original level in nature; it cannot get beyond the narrow domain of the perceptible, and can hardly depart from man's sense of pleasure. For such reasons, art can be regarded as possessed of the mimetic spirit even when the theory of imitation cannot be urged without qualification and caution.

FLATTERING IMITATIONS

The mimetic ideal of art is rendered plausible by the fact that nature herself is a kind of artist. There is at least a faint suggestion of architecture in the rough design of mountains and the definite idea of an arch after the collapse of a cave has left a natural bridge. Even more definitely is there an idea of plastic art in the natural development of the human form, which the sculptor, employing a more selective method, can do no more than emulate or, perhaps, perfect. There is, likewise, a kind of color art, or painting, in the effect of sky and sea with clouds and waves, and perhaps something more suggestive of the painter's canvas in exceptional landscapes and certain shut-in scenes in the woodlands.

With the arts of poetry and music, there is much less art on the part of nature, altho one observes that the purest poetry borrows freely from forms and activities of nature which are used in figurative ways—dawn and evening, the ebb and flow of tides, the tint and fragrance of flowers, a harvest of golden grain or rosy fruit. Then, too, there are sounds as from nature's eolian harps in the moaning of boughs in the wind, the roar of waves, song of birds and patter of the rain upon leaves. Indeed, one might try to imagine that poet and musician had done little more than organize these sights and sounds.

At any rate, even when the theory of imitation appears doubtful, the apostle of art as imitation might insist that art has carried out the general spirit of nature even when it has not followed her line upon line. This spirit is one of simplicity and unconsciousness. The moment sophistication and analysis enter in, science will appear but art take leave. Hence it may be urged that art is something natural even when it is not nature done over again in a special, rational way. But this general admission of the superb naturalness of true art is far from assent to the dictum, "Art is the imitation of nature."

MOTIVES FOR IMITATION

The mimetic theory raises certain objections which are not removed easily, if at all. These are: Why should art imitate nature? How is the imitation really carried out? What in nature is imitated? Is not such imitation limited to the spatial arts, especially sculpture and painting? A discussion of the motive and method of imitation certainly will tend to vitiate the force of the mimetic theory, altho it may still leave one with the feeling that art must be so natural as to express fidelity to nature generally.

A work of art when completed in the form of a statue or painting may look like an imitation of something in nature, but that does not prove that the artist was motivated by the mimetic ideal. If he has been engaged to carve the effigy of some important person, the portrait bust may be said to be imitative from beginning to end; but if the sculptor creates splendid shapes representative of his idea of gods or goddesses, the amount of imitation attains to only a minimum.

Why should the artist repeat the actual forms of living bodies or the real aspect of existing landscapes when, in nature itself, these human forms and natural aspects are infinitely numerous? It may seem indeed grotesque to consider the painter or sculptor as doing no more than adding artificially to the extent of the country or as increasing the population by means of stone individuals. But just as absurd is the idea that the artists in question are doing nothing more than repeat the replete effects of nature herself working vitally, massively.

It is more convincing, as an argument against imitation, to affirm that the motive within the mind and hand of the artist is far more creative than imitative. It is as tho nature had given him a hint of her intention in her world of things and persons, and had somehow inspired him to proceed further and perfect the work she had begun. Or it is as tho nature had said, "As I am a creator in my vast sphere, so be thou a creator in thine." The arms of nature are so thrown about the artist that he cannot create the unearthly and fantastic, but within the limits which nature prescribes there is still sufficient room for the creation of forms independent of the more general outlines in the natural order.

COPY OR CREATION?

If the mimetic motive in man as artist is so weak as to be ineffective, the method of a possible imitation is just as much in vain. If the artist were to proceed mimetically, the result, in sculpture, would be a plaster cast, as in the case of a death-mask. The statue would be a replica rather than a formed figure. In painting, the landscape would amount to no more than a topographical map giving the exact configuration of the land. To consider maps and masks, wax figures and manikins is but to realize that such striking semblances to their natural counterparts are not art at all.

What art does is to produce a certain significant impression of natural forms after these have passed through the maze of the artist's mind, not to reproduce these directly or mechanically.

When the possible method of imitation is scrutinized more psychologically, it appears that the artist can hardly copy what actually exists in nature, since this is given him indirectly in the form of personal perception. Thus, instead of having the artist as a sort of wax tablet capable of receiving accurate impressions from the actual forms of nature, in the human form or the living landscape, we have the complicated psycho-physical apparatus of the artist's mind. Hence, for him to record what he sees means that he, with his hand, must reproduce the image upon his retina and the impression upon his brain rather than the object itself. If the artist does imitate, his imitation by hand has to do with his own impression of the object.

Then, likewise, with the vast manifold of objects in nature, there is the question, What is to be imitated? This question is answered practically by the artist when he indulges in judicious elimination and critical selection. Not everything in nature is the subject of art, altho it is the subject-matter of science. Some things are microscopic, others wholly invisible. Hence the artist must select from among the more obvious, palpable things of nature, especially as these have a bearing upon human life on earth.

Then, too, with the object as chosen, there must be elimination and selection among details. In a statue of the human body, where does one find hairs or veins or nerves? How could the figure of Apollo represent his heart and brain, to say nothing of less dignified organs like the stomach and liver? The physician's manikin does this realistically and quite accurately, but the artist's statue is bound to ignore the essential factors in human anatomy for the sake of achieving a splendid shape which can serve an esthetic purpose.

Finally, the mimetic theory at its best could succeed with only the spatial arts already mentioned. Even in a solid art like architecture, there is no essential imitation, since the structure must be erected as a physical thing ready to observe the laws of physics, especially gravitation. In certain decorative and non-structural features, a temple or cathedral may be indulged in imitations of plants and animals, as with egg-and-dart formation, an acanthus leaf, or the typical beasts of the four Evangelists. But the edifice itself, designed in its own mode and standing in its own right, is almost altogether a free creation on the part of the architect.

MOVING–PICTURE MUSIC

When we turn from the spatial arts, where imitation has its only chance, to the temporal ones, we realize at once that the function of imitation in poetry and music is almost negligible. Poetry is unpromising as subject-matter for the mimetic theory in that this art is based upon language, in which man's free mind expresses itself according to man's own pleasure. Such a rationalized and symbolical way of representing things and events can be made artistic, but not after the manner of the mimetic theory.

It is true that the use of the trope might suggest that the figure of speech employed, being some natural object, is an imitation of nature; but the sound of the word thus used metaphorically is something far different from the thing itself. Words like sea and sky, dawn and twilight, sylvan stream and virgin forest have poetic value, but they are words and not things; moreover, they are words in just one of the many human languages. Onomatopœia as a phase of poetic art comes nearer to the mimetic ideal, but such sweetly sonorous words are in such a pathetic minimum that they make it impossible to lay down the principle that poetry is an imitative art.

Music resembles poetry in being temporal and sonorous, but is distinguished from it by its use of mere sounds instead of intelligible words. The apostle of art as imitation might try to suggest that, at times, music does actually imitate certain sounds in nature, as the roar of the sea, sound of the cataract, gurgle of the brook, moaning of the wind, and call of the bird. The repetition of certain natural forms of music does appear in this art, as, for example, in Strauss's *Alpine Symphony;* but such examples are most judiciously received as curiosities.

When music is programmatic, it departs from its own tone-world with the hope of reproducing pictorially both objects of nature and the affairs of human beings. But here, again, esthetics may well insist that such moving-picture music, as it seems to be, is more whimsical than real.

WHAT IMITATION PROHIBITS

In abandoning the theory of art as imitation for some more promising conception, we may observe that the mimetic may well serve as a perpetual warning to those whose ambitions in art tend to lead them away from the mundane to the moody, from the stable order of things to the volatile realm of subjective fancies. The arts as pursued in the present may well heed such a caution, since they are inclined to feel undue freedom in the studio.

Perhaps we cannot complain of the monstrous effect produced by the set-back style of architecture, since the exigencies of city life, to say nothing of the building code, necessitate just such a style of structure. Sculpture, as this is followed by the Rodin school, can well afford to be reminded that the human form in an easy pose suggestive of a placid mind is still the best plastic ideal to emulate, which is by way of commending the liberal method of imitation followed so successfully by ancient sculpture. Painting, too, is now far removed from any accurate suggestion of anything in the sensuous order and all-too-inclined to follow the suggestions of individual initiative and personal whim. Hence, the ideal of imitation might well be appealed to if only as an injunction.

The temporal arts of poetry and music were never closely attached to the spatial world of things, for which reason any special appeal to the court of imitation would be out of order. Nevertheless, the person of culture may suggest that the mimetic ideal does have some bearing upon these arts, which fly like kites far above the world and are held in only by slender strings. The mimetic ideal may influence these dynamic arts by advising them to retreat somewhat from the advanced positions of free verse and syncopation, and to remain more loyal to their respective media, poetry and music.

But perhaps the main objection to the idea of art as imitation is the lack of due motivation from which it suffers. The idea of copying affords no sufficient reason for the artist to indulge in creative art, for imitating is more an act of recording the old than of developing the new. Art itself is active and functional in character. To express its forms and explain its meanings, one requires something far more dynamic than is afforded by the passive theory of imitation. This dynamic, volitional quality may perhaps be suppplied by the idea of Art as Play.

ART AS PLAY

The idea that art is a form of play-activity traces as far back as the German poet, Schiller, at the end of the eighteenth century. The most salient conception in this interesting theory is found in the idea that the surplus energy which an individual or a nation enjoys can be put into the free creation of objects which have no useful bearing upon practical life. Art, then, is the expression of exuberance, in which manner it resembles the simpler forms of play. But play in the athletic sense of sports was not developed by Schiller, who tended to use the term as a playing, or plying, between remote functions of the human will.

The extremes which Schiller sought to unite by means of art-play were those of body and mind, stuff and force, the sensuous and spiritual. The moods of his own mind, which he sought to blend, were such as came from contact with the sensuous element in the poetry of Goethe and the rational factor in the philosophy of Kant. One can perhaps imagine the mood of a young poet like Schiller influenced by two such mighty and different minds, and one can feel gratified on Schiller's behalf that he came to an understanding with both of them by means of his ideal of art as the play-activity of mankind. Play as a form of life and humanity as an ideal for man came to Schiller's aid. His conclusion to the whole matter of human existence was that "Man is only completely man when he plays."

This notion of free, play-like, esthetic activity was taken so seriously by Schiller that he regarded the true education of mankind as an esthetical one. It is not fitting for man to remain upon the low plane of nature and live only a sensuous life, nor is it possible for him to raise himself immediately to the superior level of purely ethical existence. But man can take a midway position; he can use art to elevate him from the sensuous and natural to the spiritual and moral. This conception of art and esthetic education was reflected by Schiller in his matchless essay *On Grace and Dignity*, wherein he reaffirms his belief that, with the refining of sense by means of grace and the tempering of morality through dignity, man will become genuinely human.

PLAY AND POWER

But it was the mere idea of the surplus energy revealed by play-activity that was destined to become the basis of the theory of Art as Play. Herbert Spencer—after remarking that the idea was suggested to him by a German philosopher whose name he could not remember—proceeded to outline the play-theory in a biological and psychological form which included the play-activity of both animals and men. Spencer did not attempt to work out an esthetic program or to account for the origin and development of the definite fine arts. He was satisfied to give the suggestion that, in the course of an ever-expanding doctrine of evolution, what had once been mere play had developed into art.

Now, one's own analysis of the forms and functions of play are sufficient to show him to what extent art is a kindred activity. There is, of course, in the idea of play the central notion of an excess in the form of superabundance, exuberance, and the like. But, along with this idea of surplus energy in the will, there is none the less the desire for extra excitement on the part of the intellect. Art, then, may be thought of in terms of excesses—extra activity, extra intellection.

ART AND ANIMALITY

The play of animals suggests these factors. The domesticated animal will employ its excess energy and engage its idle mind in characteristic forms of play. If we assume that the cat is a dwindled descendant of the tiger, we may then regard the predatory play of the growing cat as an attempt to bring into operation the functions which its remote ancestor was forced to use in the quest for food. The characteristic play of the kitten with any little moving object and the more cruel play of cat with mouse make it easy to believe that the domesticated creature is gaining enjoyment by that release of energy and reversion to savagery which its tiger-like play betrays.

With the dog, something similar appears, only here we have a repetition of the life of the wolf upon the plain. The play of dogs is more social, if we care to put it in that scientific way, and their activity in the pursuit of one by another and the mimic attack which follows tends to suggest that these other domesticated and pampered creatures refresh their ancestral nature by the playful rehabilitation of the wolf's life, where such "play" was indulged in seriously for the sake of obtaining food.

ATHLETICS AND ESTHETICS

Such evolutionary speculations have a certain charm, to be sure, but they do not appear to lead us as close as we might desire to the base of the Pyramids, the pediment of the Apollo Belvedere, to say nothing of the origin of the poetry of Dante and the music of Palestrina.

Perhaps a nearer approach is found in the play of children, since they are human beings and, further, require certain artificial objects for their sports. The old-time games of boys, as tag, prisoner's base, hare and hounds, do suggest purely animal play and bring in review again the desire for the consumption of excess energy and the generation of extra excitement. In the instance of toys which represent the practical objects of mature life, there is doubtless a more complete suggestion of works of art. For the idea of manufacture is bound to play an important part in this or any other explanation of art-activity.

The play of grown-up people has in it the same idea of exuberance on the part of will and intellect, along with the paraphernalia and regulations of organized sport. There is, too, the survival of savage life in the use of missile and weapon, as these appear in the ball and bat, or their equivalents, in such games as base-ball, lawn tennis, golf, and even croquet. How many who indulge in such pastimes feel that their extraordinary enthusiasm is due to the fact that, in their play, they are reinstating the main features of savage warfare as indulged most seriously by their remote ancestors in primitive Europe?

Yet, after all, the theory of play tends to explain no more than play itself. Can we conclude that, since both play and art require exuberance, they are identical? We may indeed follow these engaging theories of evolution and may moralize upon them, but that will not amount to deciding that art sprang from play.

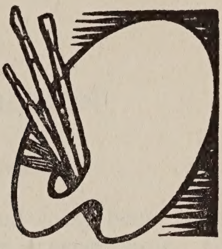
The Greeks carried their sports and arts along together and sometimes fused them, as when athletic exercise furnished the sculptor with a masculine model for his marble god. But later nations have not been so successful in combining their national sports with their national arts. Indeed, it seems as tho modern nations had decided to indulge one at the expense of the other and thus place them in juxtaposition. We think of America, England and perhaps Germany as having sports in place of arts; of Italy, France and Spain as indulging in arts instead of sports. But whether we regard the athletic and esthetic, sports and arts, as complementary or contrasted, we may feel in a vague way that there may be some more or less remote analogy between them.

WHAT'S THE RESULT?

But the attempt to make art out of play, however promising at the beginning, breaks down at the end. The disappointment is felt the moment we consider how important in art is the idea of manufacture. Organized sports may have their impedimenta, but these are produced by workmen who toil, not by people of leisure who play. The actual result of play or sport is nothing tangible. After the game, there is nothing but a feeling of satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, or a score. The athletic play, which was thought to be akin to esthetic exercise, has brought no results which could for the briefest moment be compared with the temple, the statue, the painting, poem, or symphony.

What the theory of Art as Play does have to contribute is the slender yet relatively important idea of esthetic motivation, and that in the robust form of exuberance. Just that was what the theory of Art as Imitation so grievously lacked. The first theory was all objectivity and passive in tone; the second one is all subjectivity, but not wanting in the dynamic quality. Perhaps there can be a fusion of these extremes to form a more satisfactory conception of art. And perhaps this fusion may appear in the more comprehensive, more critical conception of Art as Expression.

VII. Art as Expression



VII

ART AS EXPRESSION

EXPRESSION UNIVERSAL

IT has always been felt and long been recognized that the spirit of art is expression. But this general consciousness that art is the act of bringing out the quality of both thing and thought has recently received technical treatment in the hands of the brilliant Italian philosopher, Benedetto Croce.

The cultured person is aware, altho dimly, that art expresses something both in objects and in his perception of them. It is for him to learn that art tends to extract from his mind as much as it elicits from the object under contemplation. Indeed, the lesson that the person of culture must learn from the doctrine of art as expression is that such expression is more subjective than objective; more esthetic than physical; and concerns the feelings in one's mind more than the qualities, like colors, in an object.

But, before we can indulge in this subtle conception of expression, we must consider its more obvious nature in the field of objective art.

If we consider periods of such an art as architecture, and thus visualize the Great Pyramid, the Parthenon and the Rheims Cathedral, we are aware of differences other than those of structural form. These three edifices have both distinct forms and diverse tones.

The tone-differences are examples of expression. The Pyramid expresses something characteristic in the life of ancient Egypt; its ponderous intuition of human existence and its definite belief in the immortality of man. The Parthenon is an expression of something different; a lighter sense of life and a belief in form, as if to say in the language of Dostoievsky, "Beauty will save the world." The Gothic edifice at Rheims, severe in plan but ornate in character, expresses the upward-striving of the human soul under the inspiration of the Christian religion. Each edifice is, then, something more than a certain type of building. It is the expression of spiritual life in different degrees, varying modes.

These differences in national art are not imaginary or inconsequent. They spring from original differences in the spiritual life of nations and depart not with the passage of time. With science, this is not the case. We honor the Phenicians for the discovery of arithmetic, the Greeks for geometry, the English for the physics of Isaac Newton. But we do not refer to Phenician arithmetic or Grecian geometry or English physics, for the truths of science are neutral, not national; colorless, not characteristic. The arts, however, have nationalistic coloring and bear the characters of the particular people who have elaborated them in distinctive ways. Hence we have Italian painting, English poetry, French sculpture and

German music. These are massive ways in which art shows itself to be expression.

EXPRESSIVE PERSONALITIES

As with national characteristics, so with individual traits; the particular artist, Phidias, Dante, Bach, places the stamp of personality upon statue, poem, fugue, so that the particular type is his in all the singularity of his personality. An artist may create in the spirit of a universal esthetic experience and produce statue, painting or poem appreciated by all who become acquainted with it. But the individuality of the creator does not fade out in the course of time.

It is only in a general, complimentary way that we refer to Copernican astronomy, Newtonian physics, or Darwinian biology; but it is in a sincere and exact manner that we speak of an artist's style, as that of Titian, Spenser, Rembrandt, Shelley, Cézanne. Now, this is for the reason that art is a form of expression. It is something humanistic, personal, unique, and is the objectification of an inward form.

In approaching more closely the spirit of expression as appreciated in national and personal art, we must try to relinquish the idea that art is something physical; a thing in the form of painting or statue, a record as that of written poem or score. It will be somewhat adventurous to forsake actual art for such a sentiment as expression, but we can return in time reinforced by a commanding conception of esthetic truth. We are to realize that art is primarily a state of mind rather than a gallery of paintings or a library of poems. In the effort to secure such a fruitful realization, we might cite the authority of professional psychologists, but it will be more appropriate to derive our doctrine, as far as we can, from artists and poets.

One of the most illustrative examples that art is the expression of something inward and not the exemplification of beauty in an outward form appears in Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. Here, with the ease of a poet intuiting esthetic truth, Keats voices the ideal of art as interior expression when he says, "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter," and then bids the soft lutes "pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone." Unless the idea of art as inward expression is entertained, the esthetic ideas of the poet will be all empty of meaning. But when the expressive nature of art is felt, the reader begins to realize that true musical, poetical art consists primarily of melodies unheard and ditties of no tone.

BEAUTY INVISIBLE AND INAUDIBLE

The poet or musician who senses the inaudible may come at last to reproduce it in his poem or score, but the essential matter of the composition exists in a form spiritual and inaudible to the sensual ear. It may well be that, in time, we shall call upon a Keats or Shelley to authenticate his expressive vision of beauty in the exact form of written poem, but we should not neglect the psychological, or spiritual, fact that his poem will be, like baptism,—"the outer, visible sign of an inward, spiritual grace."

If, now, one has difficulty in crediting the reality of this disembodied poem or painting and cannot comprehend its possibility, one may be helped materially by the further idea that expression comes about by means of imagination. In this more usual function of the mind, we have something tangible to work upon. Yet it must be realized that, in art at least, imagination is no process of day-dreaming, but a means of bringing out of an object the meaning it can have for the esthetic mind.

Common imagination creates that which is not; esthetic imagination produces that which is. The imagination of the painter consists in "realizing" objects, as Cézanne called it. When imagined esthetically, he sees the ordinary as extraordinary, the real as ideal, the material as spiritual. This can be called intuiting an object, but it will be sufficient to look upon it as a superior process of imagining.

CAN YOU IMAGINE?

The poet employs this realizing imagination in the perfection of verse, but is not always conscious of or articulate about it. However, in Wordsworth's *Excursion* there is the direct expression of this in a phrase descriptive of the minds of Chaldean shepherds, in whom "the imaginative faculty was lord of observations natural." We should say, the imaginative faculty is lord of things neither in heaven above nor in the earth beneath, and that it shines with "the light that never was on sea or land." But poetic imagination is of that which appears to observations natural.

It is unjust to ourselves to think that such an imaginative faculty existed only in Chaldean shepherds, or that, to-day, it makes its genial presence felt in poets only, not in those who appear to do no more than take up room in the world where they do their work. To be sure, such penetrating imagination, or intuition, is rare; but that may mean that it has to do with the rarity within all rather than with the prevailing mood of poets.

"Many are poets who never penned their inspiration," said Byron, in *The Prophecy of Dante*. "They felt and loved and died, but would not lend their thoughts to meaner things. They compressed the god within them."

There is a delightful democracy about such a conception. It allows us to feel that we, too, while far removed from studio or even library, are the painters and poets who paint and pen only invisible lines, as it were, upon the walls of the soul. We compress within us the god that the poet releases; but that deity of imagination is there none the less, awaiting the liberation that comes from adequate expression.

POETRY AND PSYCHIATRY

The tendency to "compress the god within us" is now being recognized in practical ways unknown to poets and professional philosophers of art. This is in connection with the practise of psychiatry, which now recognizes that certain ills result from suppression of both the instinctive and intellectual, of both sex and spiritual life. This was voiced at the tenth annual convention of the Eastern Osteopathic Association, recently held in New York City. Dr. Anna Mills, a psychoanalyst, suggested that disease is often an uncarved statue or unwritten play.

"The goal of life is creativeness. The tremendous urge to express one's self fully, when it is unrealized, cannot do anything but cause one to become sick," said she.

A special example of this appeared in the case of a patient suffering from neuritis, which turned out to be an unwritten novel imprisoned within him. The practical conclusion which Dr. Mills drew was that such esthetic sufferers should seek a cure for their spiritual maladies in the creative work of poetry or painting.

Now, this psychological situation may have obtained in the mind of Byron, who expressed the energies of a nervous organism in that flow of poetry which proceeded from him with such apparent ease. More definitely does this appear in the life of Goethe, who expressed the beautiful and tormenting nature of his genius when he said, through his Torquato Tasso, "some god gave me power to tell how I suffer." The average person, however, seeking culture and desiring self-expression, need not fancy that he must descend to the depths of the nervous patient or ascend to the heights of the talented poet to grant himself sufficient expression for the normal aspirations of the mind. The main thing to observe is that expression comes from within and can assume due form either in the creation of beauty through art and literature or in the appreciation of such esthetic excellence in others.

EMPATHY

Since a practical work on the subject of culture must concern itself more with appreciation than creation, it is fitting to describe the process by means of which one achieves self-expression and releases the god within him. This is by means of "Empathy," or In-feeling, now recognized as a definite phase of emotion. Such empathy is the counterpart of expression. It is the method by which the cultivated but unskilled person enters into the spirit of art, whereby he attains to expression of the second order.

Empathy is the tendency of one's mind to project one's self into almost any situation, but chiefly into such as are interesting and exciting. It is the spectator's predominant state of mind, and that which makes one an enthusiast or "fan." Were it not for empathy, our grandstands, galleries and seats would be well-nigh empty. In a game or play of even normal interest, the intriguing quality of the entertainment is due in considerable measure to the degree in which we allow ourselves to feel that we are playing some part in the performance. In a melodrama, the spectator feels that he should and in a sense does lay hold of the villain in his dastardly work. At a baseball game, the same sort of empathic person can hardly resist the inclination to rush upon the diamond and seize ball or bat, as the case may be. All of us tend to beat time to the music of the symphony, and it requires little effort to feel that we are directing the orchestra or even playing the first violin.

FEELING OUR WAY

In a strictly physical sense, nothing of the sort takes place; but in a psychological sense, when emotion is in control, such empathy operates as far as it is supposed to. With the abnormal mind, empathy can play such a part that the patient will protest that he himself committed the crime for which another, of whom he has read in the newspapers, is about to be executed. In less serious cases, one will break into a situation, as a scuffle or quarrel, with the feeling that another person's grievance is his own. With the vast average of human minds, this empathy merely puts us in another person's place, where it acts like common sympathy, except that it tends to persuade us, egoistically, of our personal importance in the common affairs of the world.

The function of empathy in esthetic appreciation can hardly be overestimated. We weep with those who weep stage-tears and rejoice with those who rejoice in histrionic triumphs. Let one consider how he tends to pose and stride upon coming out of a theater, or how he hums, as best he can, the aria from the opera he has just heard. Is it not that he himself, in a way, played a part on that stage or performed somewhat after the manner of the *primo tenore robusto?*

Or let one review critically his state of mind after closing a novel. Was it not he who played the part of hero-villain in the murder scene in, say, Dostoievsky's *Crime and Punishment;* else, whence this chilling, quivering feeling? Was it not he, indeed, who enacted the character of hero-lover in the bedroom-and-rope-ladder chapter in, say, Stendhal's *Red and Black?* If not, why this warmth and trembling, this glow of pride and delicious sense of guilt?

SPECTATORS ON THE STAGE

If it is by means of artistic expression that the creative artist perfects his picture or poem, it is through esthetic empathy that we appreciate his word as seen and read. That is our form of expressionism. The artist works vicariously and, in the act of gratifying his urge to create, satisfies our half-urge to enjoy the contemplation of his work. If it is poetry, we appreciate the epic which reveals the objective breadth of life; the lyric that relieves the private soul by song; the idyl that celebrates, as in a festival, the primitive life of the race; or the elegy, with its power to lament the loss of something prized. When it is drama, we, too, struggle with fate or with those whom fate seems to pit against our wills in forms comic or tragic. All in all, we express through empathy the feelings we believe to be ours by poetic right, if not in accordance with the law of the land.

All great plays and novels seem to have been written for our sakes, as tho their authors would ring us into the acts and chapters wherein the deeds and experiences of hero and heroine are depicted. We cannot or dare not make love with the courage and skill of Lucien de Rubempré or the Chevalier de Greux; cannot endure love like that of Becky Sharp or Anna Karénina; but we can experience such amours vicariously, empathically, as we dilate over the tales of these delicious paper hearts.

So likewise with our "crimes"; we read detective stories with the zest that seems to come from the imaginary fear that justice is on our own tracks, at our very heels. Of course, we appreciate the story as such, but all the more do we prize our part in it, as we inject our individuality between the pages of the palpitating, thrilling work.

HOW WE POSE

In the less articulate arts of sculpture and painting we are none the less present, altho not so obtrusively. The charm of a nude statue lies not wholly in the pure plastic of noble curves, the Iliac crest of the Hermes of Praxitiles or the bar of Michelangelo in his young David; but in something simpler, more candid. In the spirit of Narcissus, we admire the frank beauty of these forms so splendidly stark and can almost believe ourselves worthy of something like the same display. The modern bathing suit is a fair example of this our Narcissian desire to display one's personal form.

The same esthetic tendency to infuse individuality into art for the purpose of personal appreciation appears in the various details of an art like painting. We behold the draftsmanship critically, but ourselves live over the life of the line. The horizontal line gives us ease, the vertical a sense of striving. The curved line imparts serenity, while the jagged one creates distress. Perspective, even in its simplest forms, pleases by virtue of its power to enlarge our hearts and let us live in a vaster world than ordinary.

Then, with colors, the vitality of red, the cheerfulness of yellow and the meditative quality of blue are mates for our moods. Just as much are we in sympathetic, or empathic, understanding with the warm or cool tone of the canvas, or with its aerial softness. The eye thus introduces us to a world of impressions which we come to enjoy by making them expressive of our own moods.

An art like music, in itself stirring, is expressive of our wills, as Schopenhauer pointed out over a century ago. In our activities, which lack the rhythmic smoothness of music, there is still the contrast between fast and slow; free-flowing melody of movement and disturbing dissonance; the timid movement so like pianissimo in contrast with the fortissimo of confident movement; the thinner tones of higher pitch and the deep bass effects, so akin to our diverse moods. Music is, indeed, a technical matter of tone, but it is likewise the expression of our human strivings, hence our interest in it.

THE CULTURAL APPEAL OF ART

Such considerations, drawn from the psychology of expression and empathy, are of no little value in revealing the ways in which the arts make their cultural appeal, but they stand in need of certain critical qualifications. On the side of the arts, it should be borne in mind that it is the artist's duty to give a concrete exemplification of what he affects to intuit and express. No doubt he sees a picture in a human face, a figure in the form and a landscape in the natural scene; but it is incumbent upon him at last to realize this in the finished picture as something physical. In like manner, he may observe a story in an event or newspaper item, but the actual tale must be told to be art.

Too often, the apostle of this alluring theory is inclined to neglect the outward visible sign of the inward spiritual grace as "expressed." This is painfully true of Croce, who has done so much to render the theory plausible and popular. He, like others, should realize that all art is expression, but not all expression is art. No, art is that kind of expression which is realizable and realized before the senses in the actual order of space and time. Before that realization comes about, art is only promissory or prophetic. The "expressed" picture or poem may not turn out well or may not realize itself at all. And it is just as much Cézanne's ideal of "realizing" nature as Croce's suggestion of "expressing" it that makes of art an accomplished fact and not an aspiration only.

ART GOES TO EXTREMES

There is no better place to state the fact that art ever rejoices in a mood of superabundance; an excess in nature, an overflow in emotion. Since we have gotten away from the idea that art is a mimetic repetition of nature, we can take a step forward and reach the ideal of art as the exaggeration of nature and life, sensation and feeling. But the artistic excess must be esthetic, not something merely striking, sensational, strange. "Art," said Prosper Merimée, the author of *Carmen*, "is exaggeration *à propos*." Yet excessive expression must be there, and to speak of beauty, after the manner of Croce, as "adequate expression" is insufficient.

There is "adequate expression" in common life where work is performed, duty done, the result achieved. But common life is not art. The peculiarity of art appears in the idea of the more-than-enough, or good measure pressed down and running over. Sufficiency, or adequacy, is something practical or utilitarian and has in it the idea of "just enough" or "that will do." In art, however, there is no such enoughness. There is always the certain touch of superabundance or there is no art.

One must sense that feeling of superabundance, but not that alone. When one is led to believe that esthetic enjoyment comes about by means of empathic expression, he is tempted to become effusive and vague. The work of art may indeed make the appeal of adequate impression, but the technical details of this, in line and color, rhythm and trope, harmony and counterpoint, cannot be omitted from the appreciation or merely included in the expressive feeling for beauty in general. Unless a certain amount of esthetical rationalism is introduced into the habit of appreciation by expression, the person who desires to gain culture from art will tend to fall back upon the crude maxim of the Philistine and assert, "I don't know anything about art, but I know what I like."

This boast about one's own ability to set a standard of taste is often accompanied by the lame confession of "I know what I want to say, but don't know how to express it." This is an impossible state of affairs; it is paralleled by the student's plea of "I know, but can't remember." What we know we remember and can express. The unrecalled and unexpressed are non-existent for the mind.

Culture is that conduct of mind which keeps what is known in evidence and prepares the same known things for flight. It is really a way of packing your mental suitcase so that everything is in its proper place and its handle ready for your hand.

It is art in particular that renders the impressions of the mind articulate.

VIII. Art for Culture's Sake

VIII

ART FOR CULTURE'S SAKE

ART FOR ART'S SAKE?

FOR about a century, the world of culture has been asked to consider the validity and value of the ideal, "Art for Art's Sake." Most often this ideal of art as independent appears in the form of insurrection on the part of minor artists and lesser critics who have grown restive under established beliefs and practises, and who wish to be free from all authority of the True and Good.

The esthetic ideal for art, rather than the intellectual and moral one, was voiced definitely as the flower of Romanticism and the seed of Decadence. But, virtually, the ideal of art as such, or art as something purely esthetic, had its inception when esthetics itself became an independent science. This was at the close of the eighteenth century.

About two centuries ago, or in 1735, the lesser German thinker, Baumgarten, introduced emotion into psychology, which up to that time had rejoiced in only intellect and will. This same Baumgarten, who exerted considerable influence upon Kant, coined the term "Esthetics," and thus tended to emancipate both human feeling and the appreciation of the beautiful.

Kant appreciated these psychological and esthetical ideas. This fact appears in the way that Kant made the sense of beauty independent of all interest, the sensuous and moral. Naturally, a rationalist and moralist like Kant would emancipate mankind upward, as indeed he attempted to do by means of the "disinterested." The person or project that is free from self-interest is calculated to be exceptionally noble, which was Kant's intention. That was his philosophical and spiritual conception of art existing in its own right and operating for its own sake.

The emancipation of the esthetical, thus begun by Kant, was carried on more systematically in the theory of Art as Play enunciated and exemplified by Schiller. But Schiller, too, far from abusing his liberty, conveyed his esthetical reasonings along a lofty plane, being guided by the ideals of "grace and dignity" rather than being debauched by studio tendencies toward fantasy and deviltry. "Man," said Schiller, "is only completely man when he plays," not when he thinks correctly or acts strictly. The essential concern of man is with esthetics, but man should only play with beauty, as he expressed it. This may have been "art for art's sake," but it was a doctrine pure and praiseworthy in the hands of Schiller.

PLATO AND TOLSTOY

If we are to decide for or against such autonomy in art, we must weigh and consider the possible arguments pro and con; but it may be well to cite a pair of profound thinkers who are eminent for their opposition to this esthetic dogma. These two are widely separated in time as well as in their outlook upon the world, but they agree in their desire to clip art's wings, if not to cage it. They are Plato and Tolstoy. One proceeded from the standpoint of an ideal republic, the other from that of an ideal social order everywhere. By strange coincidence, the ancient thinker manipulated his thoughts in such a way as to condemn Homer, while the modern one was just as much opposed to Shakespeare.

We have, then, critical notions of art which lead consequentially to the condemnation of the world's best poetry, its major epic and drama.

Plato's objections to any possible idea of art for art's sake appear at the conclusion, or in the Tenth Book, of *The Republic*. In his utopian enthusiasm, as if his political ideas were of real moment, Plato was as radical as a Bolshevist condemning Church and State in Russia. Apparently, Plato wished to keep the Beautiful submerged under the True and Good; the truth as observable in Platonic ideas, the goodness of utility in a perfect state.

If art will agree to further this sort of speculative and practical philosophy, well and good; if not, and if it goes its own sweet way, so much the worse for the artist. He and all his works are cast out of the ideal republic.

But why condemn painter and poet, if only in this dialectical way? The painter because he is not a real maker, and because he produces only a semblance of the real. This real, as in the case of a bed, is found in the idea of bed. The bed made by the carpenter is the first imitation and a useful one; but the picture of a bed is an imitation twice removed from the ideal bed, which, in Plato's mind, is the real one. There, as it were, Zeus may seek divine repose.

Then, likewise, there is a lack of utility in the mere picture of an object like a bed, and where there is no usefulness there is no goodness. Poets, too, are feeble imitators who vainly try to make things out of nouns and verbs as painters do with colors and figures. When poetry assumes a dramatic form, it leads the actor to express the emotions which a wise, good man locks silently within his calm breast. Poetry is just as offensive in its description of the irrational and unseemly, as in Homer's manner of relating immoral things about gods and men.

"We must remain firm in our conviction that hymns to the gods and praises of famous men are the only poetry which ought to be admitted into our state."

POETRY AND POLITICS

Tolstoy considered the esthetic problem in the light of modern scientific and social thought, which gave him his ideals of the True and Good. He felt that modern art was not genuine but "counterfeit," and that its tendency was anti-social. But Tolstoy's main objection to modern art is found in the fact that it violates his ideal of the esthetic function, which is "to unite men with God and with one another." Most works of modern art, by being sensual, keep man far below the spiritual level of the divine whole; when they are patriotic, they tend to disintegrate mankind into small, nationalistic groups instead of assembling them in one human family. Examples of good art, which Tolstoy would admit into his ideal Society, are: *The Robbers*, by Schiller; Victor Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea*, and *Les Miserables;* the novels and stories of Dickens: *A Tale of Two Cities*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Chimes*, and others; *Uncle Tom's Cabin;* Dostoievsky's works, especially his *Memoirs from the House of the Dead;* and *Adam Bede*, by George Eliot.

In modern painting, Tolstoy finds few pictures which exemplify the two great commandments of the law; more often are they mere exhibitions of technique, which is, of course, art for art's sake. Tolstoy does find true art in Millet's *Man with the Hoe* and pictures in this style by Jules Breton.

Such selections are desperately meager, so that one must conclude there will be as little art in Tolstoy's ideal Society as in the Russian Soviet. The severity of his socialistic esthetics is felt when it leads him to condemn, almost automatically, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, a great deal of Shakespeare and Goethe, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelungen*. The ideal of art for art's sake fares badly with social philosophers.

AMATEURISH VIEWS OF ARTISTS

The large issue involved in this fundamental question of art is voiced in the contemporary conflict between the Humanist and Antihumanist. Humanism, in the 1930 sense of the term, attempts to adjust one art to another and man as man to all of them. Unfortunately, this ambitious doctrine breathes no pure air of esthetics, while its sky is somewhat clouded with ideas about education, economics, science and the like.

Hence, instead of having a doctrine of culture through art engage in any polemical discussion of art's function at the present time, it will be wiser and more fruitful to indulge in a certain noble narrowness in which the arts themselves, or the invigorating, informing spirit of them, may voice their own purposes.

THE ARTS PROTEST

When the desired doctrine of art for art's sake is submitted to the arts themselves, the result is no decided conclusion for or against the esthetic position. If we begin with an art like architecture, we can hardly argue that the Great Pyramid, the Cathedral at Cologne or the Woolworth Building was erected in a purely esthetic spirit for the sake of glorifying a certain style. The very magnitude of the building and its obvious purpose frustrate such a conception.

Likewise with sculpture; the frieze of the Parthenon and the Tomb of Julius the Second are things too vast and solid to be subsumed under such a light doctrine as that of sculpture for sculpture's sake. Certain little buildings and little figures, as Le Petit Trianon and miscellaneous statues in miniature, might be viewed in a purely stylistic way, but genuine architecture and sculpture tower above the altitude attained by pure estheticism.

The art of painting is less ponderous and august, and might begin to appear as the expression of esthetic autonomy. Yet, when one thinks of the frescoes of Angelo and Raphael in the Vatican and of mural painting generally, one hesitates to think that such work was done just for the sake of art. Light, little canvases with their pleasant landscapes and pretty figures might seem to be of purely artistic origin, but masterpieces painted into the very walls of enduring buildings betray a spirit more august and solid. So, likewise, poetry; an epic of Homer or Vergil means more than verse for verse's sake, altho this need not be the case with a little lyric. In drama, a deep tragedy of Æschylus or Shakespeare seems something more than art where a light comedy does not. The symphonies of Beethoven and operas of Wagner, to cite music, are not really tone for tone's sake, which might be the case with a song by Schubert or a Chopin nocturne.

If the suggestion of such impromptu reasoning be reliable, it might be taken to mean that anything small in art is as tho for art's sake, while the large in art is of another spirit. But this suggestion, if urged as argument, could only turn out ridiculous. Hence it is better to come to an understanding with the arts by assuming that they are not as free as the doctrine of art for its own sake would have us believe; but that their restriction need not be enjoined upon them grievously from without by reason or morality, science or sociality; it may be imposed upon them from within by the spirit of art itself.

If, then, the Beautiful can rule its own spirit, it need not be dominated by the Good and True.

ART AND RESTRAINT

Now, this question of esthetic limits is simply one of Restraint. Can and will the sense of beauty restrain itself, or must it be guided by a moral conscience and scientific accuracy? When culture considers what the arts have been and are still, it is ready to conclude that autonomy in art means that self-rule which art has always exercised. There have been and ever will be aberrations in taste, but there are just such things in conscience and scientific speculation, too. If art is ill, it must prescribe its own cure on the basis of good taste. It can preserve its esthetic health by means of the restraint already referred to.

For all the freedom that fares forth from art's sense of superabundance and exuberance of expression, there is in it sufficient sense of beauty to save it from irrational and immoral excesses. Indeed, there is about art perhaps nothing more characteristic than its own sense of moderation, altho that is chiefly the restraint of good taste.

There are thus general limitations which art places upon itself in order to achieve its own ends. They may not be the limits of the True and Good, in the scientific and ethical sense of those terms; they are rather the more melting boundaries of Nature and Humanity. When art, as is sometimes the case, oversteps the limits of the natural and human, as in Decadence, it is no longer art.

In addition to these general outlines prescribed by the worlds of things and persons, there are special restrictions which art places upon itself when it relegates each of the five fine arts to its own technique. This technique is often so exacting that the artist may attempt some sort of esthetical transgression, as when a poem is so made up of images as to suggest painting or when music endeavors to imitate literature and relate something, as in Wagner's operas as tone-poems. But art refuses to be misled by these minglings of modes. It accepts them as curiosities rather than as new forms. There are certain results attainable in painting, as the representation of static forms, and quite different ones in music with its flux of forms; but neither art suffers because it is different from the other. Both are children of the free woman, but each has its distinct features.

TASTE AS CENSOR

When the freedom of art is considered ethically, and not in an esthetical manner only, it appears that the liberty of conscience is much greater than the freedom of taste. We are inclined to believe that art, not morality, is the unrestrained force in human life, but the limits of art are often severe. In art, just such and such things can be done, and they must be done according to definite technique. In morality, almost anything can be done provided it follow the most general analogy of the Good.

Consider the natural restrictions of the studio in comparison with the industrial world and battlefield, the institution of marriage and the social order generally, and you will realize at once that liberty accompanies conscience in the moral life long after it has abandoned taste in the world of art.

The reason why art seems free, but is not, may be found in the fact that the genial rule of beauty and the serene domination of expression beget the spirit of joyful restraint in place of grudging rejection. Even when the appropriate field of art is pathetically narrow in comparison with the vast acres of morality, the artist need practise practically no self-denial in the pursuit of his chosen work. Man does all sorts of ugly but moral things, but still feels aggrieved by his ethical limitations. He does few beautiful things, but is satisfied with his esthetic liberty.

To realize this, just consider what one does in the course of a single day of his precious life without fear of conscience or the police-court; and consider further how few of those deeds are so beautiful as to have their place in one chapter of a book. We rise up and lie down, dress and undress, eat and drink and attend to all the wants of the natural man, but few of these are beautiful things. For there is no such liberty in art as there is in life.

ART'S NOBLE NARROWNESS

Or compare art with science, which presses its way into the secret recesses of nature, there to disclose crude forces, offensive chemicals, disgusting insects, vile germs and the like. Or observe how the science of medicine deals with what, for art, would be distinctly obnoxious—infection, disease, malignant growths, lesions, discharges, matters of gynecology, neurotic afflictions, and a legion of other ills that flesh is heir to. All these are acceptable to science; none is acceptable to art; to art with its narrowed field, exacting technique and esthetic norm.

Some art does indeed attempt to emulate the freedom of science, of medicine, but the result is only non-art. The contemporary novel in America is showing this plainly, painfully, in its striving after Realism.

It is, of course, in the field of the ethical that the autonomy of art is supposed to meet opposition; but one who takes a cultural point of view need have no concern about either liberty or morality. In both the moral and artistic, there is restraint, but the broad heterogeneity of the moral life calls upon the common man to yield with the grim determination to be good, while the narrow homogeneity of art does no more than command tranquil acquiescence on the part of artist and cultured person.

The contrast between the two situations, of morality and art, may be represented by relegating morality to a broad but limited sphere, art to a narrow tube open at both ends. The liberty of the moral man in his actual life is latitudinarian, but still is a limited liberty. The freedom of artist and culturist is by no means as broad; it is limited by the idea of contemplation.

ESTHETIC "IMMORALITIES"

Art must reject any number of the coarse and candid acts of life on the ground that they are not beautiful or fair to contemplate. Aye, merely to describe the complete act of eating a meal, which is no immoral act, would be bad literature. But, after art has once recognized its esthetic limitations, it can begin to relish its own private freedom.

It is here that art is sometimes supposed to be immoral when it need not be so, provided it confines its effect to the contemplative. It would be immoral to go unclothed in public, but nudes in an art gallery are quite moral figures against whom there is no law. In like manner, there are serious commandments in the Decalog, and these cannot be violated without sin.

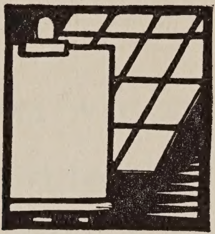
But the story of hero or heroine, like Macbeth or Raskolnikov, like Valerie Marneff or Emma Bovary, is not itself sinful in either the writing or reading thereof. This is because art is limited to the idea of a vicious or vulgar act, or because art is purely contemplative and not intended to incite to crime. We are not here raising the question of censorship, which is a matter of law; we are only pointing out that, with culture, there is a certain kind of freedom, the freedom of fineness, in which true art rejoices.

The ideal of art for art's sake arose at a time when art was aspiring freely and fully after beauty of form, as for example in the morbid tales of Poe and the decadent poems of Baudelaire. If the artist would adhere to the original estheticism of art-autonomy, the problem of freedom in art would be solved more easily, more satisfactorily than is the case now that realism is using its liberty to arrive at purely naturalistic effects.

Finally, the whole problem of free art can be solved if both artist and moralist will depart from their extreme, opposed positions and assume that art exists and operates for the sake of culture. A poem need not be written or a picture painted for the purpose of enforcing an ethical ideal, altho great poems have usually been didactic in their general tone. Nor need such works of art be perfected merely to reveal technique or promote style, even when these esthetic things have been done. No, a work of art can be worthy of its creator when it aims unaffectedly to nourish man's inner life and contribute to the culture of the nation.

After the conflict between art and morality is over and a work of art has found its place in human life, it is prized for its cultural value more than for its moral worth or technical superiority.

IX. *Getting Culture from a Canvas*



IX

GETTING CULTURE FROM A CANVAS

APPRECIATING DIFFICULTIES

ART in general is classical imitation or romantic play or realistic expression, depending upon how we feel about it or how we have been taught. It may be just as well here and now to throw theory to the winds of doctrine and begin to consider what just one art is like. Art itself is most likely to suggest painting, hence it will be wise to set out with that particular art in view. In so doing, we must appreciate the difficulties which confront the painter when he endeavors to crowd an actual landscape into his narrow canvas or take a human figure and make it stand up in a natural way. We must take his point of view and sympathize with him or we shall not see what he's driving at with his brush.

It is difficult for the layman to come to an understanding with the painter. The layman runs to the extremes of gushing with unintelligent enthusiasm or snickering with equally irrational disgust. The cultured person will avoid these poles and assume a more temperate attitude. He will not expect his painter to be a photographer or a magician, but an honest artist who has seen something that has impressed him and has used his technique to render an adequate representation of it.

But the average observer doesn't know what to look for. He expects either a magical effect or a life-like representation. His painter must either work a miracle on his canvas or make it act with the fidelity of a photographic plate.

ART YARNS

The art fables that have come down to us and still go the rounds have produced a painful misconception of the painter's problem. The one about Zeuxis and Parrhasius is the best known and most ridiculous. Zeuxis showed his skill by painting a bunch of grapes with such realistic fidelity that the birds flew down and began to peck at the painted fruit. Not to be outdone by this test, Parrhasius invited Zeuxis to draw the curtain in front of his canvas and see what he had done. This Zeuxis attempted to do, but lo! it was only the picture of a curtain. Hence it was concluded that Parrhasius was the greater painter, since he had deceived the human eye and not that of a mere bird.

It is well known how Apelles used to hide behind his pictures in order to hear and profit by the criticisms of the beholders. When the cobbler criticized the painting of the sandal, Apelles changed it, but when the cobbler proceeded to point out other flaws in the work, Apelles said, "Cobbler, stick to thy last." It is not so well known, perhaps, that the same Apelles was reputed to have painted Alexander's horse in such a life-like way that another horse neighed upon seeing it.

In the same spirit of pseudo-appreciation of art, it is said that Velasquez painted the portrait of a Spanish admiral with such naturalness that Felipe IV addressed him as tho he were the officer in flesh and blood. Quintin Matsys, so the story goes, painted a bee on an angel's leg, and such was the realistic effect that a brother artist tried to help the angel by brushing it away. Mark Twain saw the ridiculous in all this when, in speaking of the picture of *The Great Hair Trunk*, he related how an ex-baggageman stepped up to the canvas and tried to check it.

In O. Henry's story, *Art and the Bronco*, this amusing writer relates how a cowboy had painted a picture of another cowboy on horseback trying to round up the herd. When the cowboy-artist was in doubt about the merit of his work, he tested it by mounting his own steed and driving past the enormous canvas, whereupon his faithful bronco plunged right into the canvas to assist in rounding up the milling herd.

All such yarns savor of the art that once prevailed in the Eden Musée, whose life-like wax figures were often confused with those who gazed upon them, so that the innocent visitor might go to a wax policeman for information, or, with the delusion reversed, laugh at and make critical comments upon some supposed figure which, however, was only another living spectator.

But a painter attempts no such wizardry with his brush. His aim is neither to rival nature nor to deceive mankind, but to express an esthetic mood or an artistic object. He wishes to bring a certain graphic situation to light in order that its effect may be realized.

THE PAINTER'S TRUE PURPOSE

The psychological aim of the painter is to render us conscious of what otherwise might be an unconscious effect produced upon the retina. When art is taken up in such a sincere way, we realize that the significant effects of objects have ever escaped us. Their actual forms and colors, the way they behave under the influence of light and air, and their total impression have been passed over by us in our desire to observe and use these objects in purely practical ways.

We look at the sky to see what the weather is like and gaze upon the ocean to decide whether it is safe to set sail. The artist, however, with his cloud effects and marines, would have us observe the effects of color and light for their own sakes, apart from any interest which we may have in sky or sea. The calculated effect of painting upon the mind of the cultured person is that of equipping it with real sensations and the actual appearance of objects. We do not really know what a tree or a meadow looks like, hence we have to turn to pictures of these to realize what nature as artist is actually accomplishing out there in the landscape.

The sensations we receive from modern painting may not afford much food for thought or material for conversation, unless we are in an artist's studio, but they will give our culture solidity and balance. So much of what passes as culture consists of words that it is well to realize how much culture there is in things. The art of painting thus tends to render our culture firm.

APPROACHING THE STUDIO

In approaching the art of painting, we must first bridge the gap between art-gallery and artist's studio by accommodating our vision from the far-sightedness of distant admiration to a closer and more intimate view of the painter's work. You in your conventional attire are quite different from him in his smock. You gaze upon his finished picture after it is hung, but have very little idea of the intentions it embodies or the obstacles it has overcome.

This is because the art of painting involves two contrasted ideas—the subject portrayed and the technique involved in the successful expression of it. Just as you are inclined to think of fruit and vegetable without regard to gardening, so you tend to appreciate the object displayed on the canvas rather than the artistic treatment which made the portrayal possible.

The difference between the stolid spectator and the sentimental artist may be stated in an exaggerated form by saying, "With the spectator, the subject is everything and the treatment nothing; with the artist, the subject is nothing but the technique everything." The breach between the two has widened much of late, because the art of photography has made us feel that a picture should be an exact reproduction of an object or scene, while the more advanced schools of art are farther and farther away from any such idea of photographic representation. To look at a picture produced by some photo-news service and then turn to a futuristic painting is to realize that in things pictorial science and art have had a falling out. We must be less worldly, less clever if we are to become more cultured.

PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

The painter has always been more or less independent of the pictorial ideal; he is now more than ever free from it. Our trouble is that we can hardly help looking at the canvas as tho it were meant to be the illustration of some story or the representation of some scene. We can hardly tolerate, still less appreciate, the notion that the artist painted what he saw or what he felt. How can an artist's intuition or mood take form and color and yield a landscape which shall be a "state of the soul"? Our stubborn common sense, now aided by the science of photography, makes us critical or even contemptuous of the painting which bears likeness to nothing in earth beneath or heaven above. We are dominated by the phlegmatic idea that the painter should paint things as they are, not as they seem to him or impress his emotions. The subject-matter seems imperative.

There is much to be said in favor of the subject in painting—landscape, figure, portrait, historical scene—but it has been said many times already by practical writers on art and felt ever so much more by practical people who have "done" the famous galleries. Then there is something to be said in opposition to those artists who are indifferent to subject-matter and overzealous in their pursuit of studio technique. But since we ourselves have overdone the purely practical, historical and obvious side of painting, it will be well to lean a little in the opposite direction, even tho we approach the abyss of "art for art's sake." The peril involved in such a view of painting will stimulate our culture, and make us more cautious about criticizing artists whose moods and methods we cannot comprehend. We must learn to appreciate technique.

THE ARTIST'S BRUSH

Probably the most technical thing about the artist is the way he handles his brush. Of course, we might go so far as to consider the nature of the canvas he stretches and try to discuss such things as "size," "tempera," "glair," "pigment" and the like, but these things concern the dealer in artists' materials more than the person who wants to view the painter's procedure.

We see plainly that one painter will produce a smooth canvas, another a rough one. We find less pigment on a canvas by an old master than on one by a modern painter. We note less brush-work in the old Florentine school than in the modern Barbizon. Even in the Renaissance, when men were artists rather than painters, we are impressed with the idea that Titian applied the paint the way Michelangelo did not. Of course, we would not presume to decide whether the artist had used the point of the brush or the side of it, or where he had dropped the brush and used his fingers. That would involve a technique which would be too technical, just as it would be somewhat alien to our purpose of artistic appreciation.

We are not at home in the studio, where technique and the tricks of the painter's trade seem utterly foreign to what we observe and strive to appreciate in a gallery or at an exhibition. Even when we go to such displays of finished art, where paintings are now so framed as to become pictures, we don't know what to look for. If we are guided about by an artist, we are disconcerted by the way he neglects the actual subject-matter and devotes his attention to mere brush-work. He wants a face to reveal flesh tints and not look like a wax figure in a show-window. He expects hard objects to look hard and soft ones soft, even when both are placed on the same canvas by the same brush. We look around for "something worth while," but he wants only the "values" which can be produced by means of color, light and air. He can show us samples of such technique in older painters like Dürer and Velasquez and moderns like Whistler and Fortuny.

ARTIST AND PAINTER

The difference between the artist and ourselves is that we are looking for art and artist, while he wants painting and painter. If we can find what we think is suitable subject-matter at all well represented, we are satisfied with our esthetic excursion; but the artist-friend is intent upon the way the brush has presented the subject, no matter what it may be. We admire Raphael and Holman Hunt; he prefers Rembrandt and Watteau. We have historical knowledge and common sense, but we lack the sophistication of the studio. We lack the taste necessary to absorb talent.

That's why we can't "see" the art in the painting which hangs before us. We came into the gallery fresh from the street, where real objects assumed their actual forms and took their place in the world of space and time, matter and motion. But now we are in a different world and feel like owls in the sunlight. The old prejudices stick in the eyes like cinders. We complain that the picture of something doesn't look like anything, and wish that the painter had made his intention plainer. What is this that is represented on the canvas? Who are these painted people within the frame? Yes, we ask commonplace questions in connection with what is unusual. We want the figure to step out of the frame and have Hermione leave her pedestal and be a good mixer.

Then, worse still, we expect the artist to be a sort of scene-painter who represents stage backgrounds with such verisimilitude that we can't decide where the "property" ends and the painted scenery begins. We've heard stories about impossible painters who painted with such verism that they were able to deceive birds and human beings; the birds pecked at the painted cherries or the human beholders tried to lay hold of the painted objects. Art is no such sleight-of-hand. The artist has no desire to deceive us. He wants us to realize that his canvas is not an integral part of the actual world, but something set apart for purposes of representation and expression.

Art is not art because it is an imitation of nature; it's art because it isn't imitation at all, but something different. The cultured person is supposed to draw the line of distinction.

WHAT SHOULD THE ARTIST PAINT?

Somehow, we can't get away from the notion that the painting should look like something and convey some idea of what is going on within the frame. At heart we do know better, but we are fearful of trusting the heart. We realize that what's great from the standpoint of a work on history or a book on travel is not necessarily great in an art gallery.

No real artist is thrilled by the artistic possibilities of Cæsar crossing the Rubicon, or even Washington crossing the Delaware, half as much as by the idea of nameless rustics rowing across a stream in an old boat. He sees nothing in a possible picture of Pike's Peak, but can do something with an anonymous hill which reveals serene lines, tones and light-and-shade effects. He lets the railroad company develop the esthetic possibilities of the Grand Canyon and turns his eyes toward some shut-in scene where the woodland reveals a modest glen. It isn't a picture of Niagara Falls, but a painting of some modest cataract in a diminutive stream which intrigues his artistic eye.

Even when he is after esthetic effect, the artist does not wish to paint a picture of "Miss America," so famous for her pulchritude; he would rather see a "picture" in what is just a face, and paint what he will call "Portrait of a Young Girl." He could do nothing with the Inauguration of President Hoover as a subject for painting, but might achieve something with a picture of an aged notary public in his dusty, cobwebbed office. The Battle of Gettysburg wouldn't mean half as much as a fight between two amiable rowdies on the village common. For it is not the matter but the manner that counts.

Our trouble is that we persist in making moral and social distinctions where we should be satisfied with purely esthetic ones. But it may be that the children of this day and generation, viewed as artists, are wiser than the children of light, when the children of light affect so much wisdom and ethical insight. This is because we are clear-sighted as to subject-matter but dull to artistic treatment. Of course, the artist must paint something, for he can hardly produce a picture rejoicing in mere color and light, altho that has been done. But the subject of his color-sketch will be to him a sort of excuse for painting, or even a necessary evil. We who are following the mysterious tracks of his brush must strive to obliterate some of our conventional distinctions.

We can for the time get away from hedonistic considerations and thus forget the difference between the pleasant and unpleasant. Our pleasure must come in the form of esthetic satisfaction. We must be just as radical in removing the barrier between good and bad, the sheep and the goats. Art's "goodness" has only the virtue of adequate expression. Just as resolutely must we forsake academic ideals and refuse to recognize the otherwise important differentiation betwixt wisdom and folly, the rational and irrational. Certainly we cannot afford to be snobbish in a studio and insist upon the social distinction of high and low. The best people do not afford the best subjects for artistic treatment. They wouldn't let the artist bring out by expression what they make so obvious.

REMOVING OLD LANDMARKS

Our mental and moral distinctions are so many Gordian knots which we must let the artist cut. We must rise "beyond good and evil" if we are to behold beauty. The actual sight of a wheat-field may be more pleasant than that of a swamp, but there may be greater color-values in the more repulsive part of the landscape. Of course, we prefer a beautiful woman to an old crone, but Rembrandt can achieve better results with the hag than with the lady so sumptuously gowned. From a purely social point of view, there's an obvious difference between prince and pauper, plutocrat and proletarian, lady or waiting-maid, mansion or thatched roof. But these distinctions do not hold on a canvas; as far as they are made at all, the preference is in favor of the socially "low" subject.

Culture itself may involve a certain shade of aristocracy, just as it may make us wonder how there can be culture in a democracy. But as far as the art of painting is involved, there is always a sense of democracy, or indifference to social station and financial standing. Indeed, it is not at all unusual for the artist to be an anarchist; not that he has worked out any political program of this sort, but because his artistic ideals blind him to the class distinctions and established norms which the inartistic social order has built up. The artist wants his art to be absolute, not relative to anything moral or social or political. He would have his painting as non-committal as a Persian rug or a Byzantine mosaic or so much design. That's why his technique puzzles and annoys us. We must become cultured, it seems, by becoming a trifle uncouth, like him.

VIEWING THINGS UPSIDE DOWN

Now, all of this culture by means of the artist's canvas seems like a reversal of our habitual attitude, and that is really what it amounts to. We must see paintings with different eyes.

It is related of Whistler that he was once importuned by a young artist to use his influence in having the amateur's painting exhibited at the salon. The desired result was achieved and the poor canvas displayed. But when the budding genius saw it, the clouds were at the bottom of the picture and the trees growing down from above.

"Oh, Mr. Whistler," he protested, "you've hung my picture upside down!"

"I had to," said the older artist, "because the committee wouldn't accept it in the usual way."

The "usual way" is what stands in our light when we attempt to appraise and appreciate painting. We know how things "ought to look" and are bothered when they assume a different appearance on the canvas. We should hang them upside down. Indeed, a good, practical way of sensing a landscape as so much color and light is to look at it through the knees instead of over the shoulders. We could see it perfectly if we were to stand on our heads. In like manner, we sense the artistic values of a picture, or even a photograph of a friend, by turning it upside down so that the eyes can register it in independence of the mind, which is used to passing judgment upon objects perceived in the usual way.

"Topsy-turvy," then, is the first rule to set up and follow when we want to get culture from painting. We must drop the prejudices which have blinded us to beauty, and see art in an unusual way.

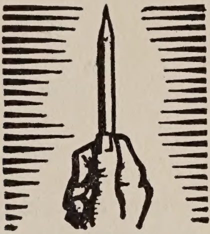
TOUCHING ON TECHNIQUE

Without actually standing on our heads or donning the attire of the studio or getting pigment upon our fingers, we can begin to take an artistic point of view and get into an esthetic frame of mind. The artist's temperament, his impedimenta and his peculiar vision need not be adopted, since he is not an artist who is one outwardly. We'll leave the artist to his tubes and brushes, which he understands better than we, and set about to master the less professional phases of his art. Then we shall find ourselves free from the idea of a "great painting" by a "great artist," for we have dropped the language of politics to take up the lingo of painting. We must expunge the word "great."

The less technical features of this art, firmly set in the artist's mind and not absent from that of the critic, are hardly more than six. They are: *line* and *color*, *light* and *atmosphere*, *perspective* and *composition*, altho we may have to add tone and values. Once we are in such possession of them that we can bring them out as spectacles when we visit the gallery, we need suffer no longer from bad conscience because we cannot appreciate textural effect produced by the artist's brush work. We have taken a middle ground between art-gallery and studio, and from that average position we shall be able to cultivate the art of painting as something which is more than superficial entertainment for the sightseer or exact historical information for the person who sees pictures in "the usual way."

Now for technique in detail.

X. The Six Things to See



X

THE SIX THINGS TO SEE

WE DON'T SEE STRAIGHT

IF you were to attempt the picture of a man or a horse to amuse a sick child, you would be brought to the painful realization that the child liked your effort only because it was such a drawing as it would itself make. Indeed, the child could easily take up the pencil and proceed to fill the page with human and equine specimens as veritable as yours. What you do under such circumstances is to write, not draw. You delineate the man or horse idea just as truly as tho you were to write the words, "man," "horse." Fortunately for those of us who cannot express our ideas graphically, we have reached our intellectual levels by means of business brains or professional ability. Otherwise, we should have to be classed among the morons, for our draftsmanship is about eight years old.

This is largely because we do not see aright. We see things as we reason they ought to be, not as they truly appear. If we had the artist's vision and could see real appearance, the perfection of a picture would depend upon only manual dexterity to be accomplished in time and after instruction. Lacking such linear vision, in which the forms which things have take shape in the way they appear, we commit sins of omission and commission. We leave out the important lines and insert the unimportant ones. The result is that we but delineate in a chirographical way what the artist would describe with the side of his pencil.

THE PAINTER AS DRAFTSMAN

The most obvious thing in the art of painting is draftsmanship, the most salient feature the line. In seeking to acquire culture from the canvas, we can do nothing better than stress the ideal of linear fidelity, which unto true art is not grievous, while for us it is safe. We grant without dispute that the pictorial results of objects can be achieved without following the ideals of the engraver. The same effect can come about, as it did with Titian, Giorgione and Correggio, by a more massive and coloristic method of placing an object upon the canvas. We may think after the manner of line, but sense perception lays hold of objects in a more bulky manner, which the cubists of our day have not failed to recognize. However, when we laymen want to get into the spirit of painting in ways suitable to the precision of our rationalistic minds, we have a right to look for line and lay stress on its significance. Only the most *outrê* critics and most rabid impressionists among the artists will lift their eyebrows at our ingenuousness.

There have been as many great draftsmen, or linearists, as there have been artists who were supreme as colorists. Furthermore, the beginnings of modern painting were made by men who were famous for their fidelity to line—Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael. If we wish to cite superb painters who were less committed to line, but who still drew, we may mention Rembrandt, Rubens and Velasquez. Should we desire to bring our art-history more up to date, we may appeal to the canvases of David and Gérôme, and might make some cautious reference to the pre-Raphaelites of England.

THE LIFE OF THE LINE

We would not for a moment assert that these our linear idols made mere illustrations of certain holy or classic subjects, for we are aware of the fact that their lines had vitality in themselves and revealed the originality of the artists whose brushes delineated them. There was with none of them any vain craving after scientific accuracy, but there was with all of them what we must call linear fidelity to the medium in which they worked. The line of Botticelli was exquisite, that of Leonardo had grace with strength; Raphael was delicate but none the less decided, as tho he strove after human dignity; while he who made the Sistine Chapel famous for his frescos drew with the vigor which created the "bar of Michelangelo." Some of the earlier Italians may have been too precise and metallic, as in the case of Mantegna, Ghirlandajo and Masaccio, but we may pit against these such early Germans as

Cranach, Dürer and Holbein, who made the line more vital.

For ourselves, we can get into the linear spirit of art by experimenting with lines, altho we have given up the idea of any realistic representation of objects. Draw a horizontal line one inch long and then from the middle of it erect a perpendicular of the same length. We know that the lines are equal, and that there is no possibility of what the relativists in science call the "Fitzgerald contraction"; but the horizontal line appears shorter. Now draw a zigzag line and contrast it with a sort of large open "S" tilted back at an angle of forty-five degrees. Just as the vertical line seemed longer than its horizontal mate, so the jagged line feels harsher than the sinuous curve.

These simple experiments of ours may let us into some of the secrets of draftsmanship, if not into the fuller matter of esthetic judgment. Our eyes, with their optical muscles, felt more strain when rolling up the vertical than they experienced with the horizontal line, hence they reported extra length. Those same eyes registered unpleasantness when we conducted them along the zigzag path, and expressed a mute preference for the smoothness of the sinuous curve. It may be that, by "empathy," we transported our being into the line and observed how we should feel if we ourselves were to follow these different lines as paths. But whether purely optical or empathic, we find it possible to enter into the life of the line as used by the painter.

THE LINES IN PLEASANT PLACES

Now we can look at pictures with eyes that have been sharpened by their insight into the line. Where the predominating lines are horizontal, we feel repose. A room in an old farmhouse seems cozy because the low ceiling emphasizes the horizontal effect, while the drawing-room of a mansion appears stately because the ceiling is high. A long row of two- or three-story houses in the older part of New York gives us a comfortable feeling, which we welcome after the strain of viewing skyscrapers. A painting may have various other attractions, like warm colors and suffused atmosphere, but much of our esthetic comfort is experienced upon the purely linear basis of a draftsmanship which indulges in the horizontal effect.

The vertical line is more severe and trying. It tests the character of our culture, since it calls upon us to react with a sense of dignity rather than of grace. Tall trees are not like broad meadows, or lofty summits akin to the serene situation on the lowlands. If you own land on Sugar Hill, New Hampshire, you would better build on the western slope, where you can survey the open space of modest hills, than toward the east, which commands a vision of the tight, perpendicular landscape of the Presidential Range, with summits averaging more than a mile in altitude. If your artist is severe, as in the case of the early Italians, he'll test you with his vertical lines; if more amiable, like the painters of the Barbizon school, he'll let your soul rejoice in the serenity of the horizontal.

The sinuous line of beauty is perhaps the most appealing because of its imperceptible changes, if not for its general likeness to the lines of the human form. It is indeed the "line of beauty," altho there can be beautiful effects in straight lines. The rolling earth and cloud-swept sky, as well as the melting lines of the human body, conspire to prejudice us in favor of this suave form of draftsmanship.

The older artists used this line in their oval pictures and "tondos," or round pictures, altho this was more a matter of composition than of drawing. Certain moderns, like Theodore Rousseau and Daubigny, involving the sinuous line in their draftsmanship, give us a wavy effect which registers joyousness.

LINE NOT MERE OUTLINE

When we view paintings line-wise, we must get away from our original conception of the line as mere outline and banish the idea that drawing is writing, as tho we could get the meaning of an object from a sort of chirographical contour. We realize now that drawing means composition and perspective, and that lines drawn upon the figure may mean as much as the one drawn about it. When the artist is perfecting a pen-and-ink sketch and cannot avail himself of color, he is put to it to realize the possibilities of line which, in a way, can give him some of the values which he might wish to secure from color. Then there is action, which draftsmanship can realize by adopting appropriate angles, just as you can see by drawing little pin-like bodies with their pin-like limbs and pinhead heads. You can make these stand up or sit down, run or walk, leap or fall merely by altering the angles of their elongated pin-bodies.

All in all, line, which contemporary painting affects to despise in favor of mass, is worthy of the painter's art, while for us it is most elucidating in getting into the secret of an art whose meanings may have appeared somewhat hieroglyphical. We can take impromptu lessons in art-appreciation by observing how the cartoonist produces effects of being, action and emotion by the mere touch of pen. A few significant lines scratched off by some Goldberg or Ding, not to speak of those who produce more interestingly outrageous comics, serve to show what can be done by such stark methods.

FROM LINE TO COLOR

We turn from line to color with the feeling that what we know about draftsmanship will aid us in appreciating the more vital but less intelligible phase of painting realized by the pronounced colorist.

We know that the older artists drew a preliminary sketch on paper or board before they turned to the canvas with paint. Most significant of this, perhaps, is one of Raphael's preparatory studies of the *Madonna of the House of Alba*, where the architecture of the human body is studied out in the form of an anatomical impossibility of a female figure with the legs of a man! Since the finished picture was to drape the bony knees of the male model, it mattered not. But its shows us the scrupulous care with which the older artists designed per line what they assumed to paint in color.

Line in painting might seem to confuse us because of its limited possibilities, and color save us by its very richness. But the situation is just the reverse. The very poverty of line in art is akin to our slender means of appreciating a canvas; the very wealth of color creates the suspicion that it is too much for us. However, we can feel color and experience the moods it is calculated to produce, and can hope, perhaps, to come to an understanding with both the hues upon the canvas and the feelings which they further in us. Color is vital, realistic, variable; as are we also. It yields the solid actuality of things and lets us see them as they appear bathed in the light of the sun. It gives us the actual landscape, where draftsmanship produces only a map of the country. We are entertained but perplexed by color; we experience more enjoyment than enlightenment.

COLOR—MINDED PEOPLE

Some of us are "color-minded" or "chromesthetical." We vision color when we hear tone, and enjoy a symphony as tho it were the display of a rainbow. Some of these "chromesthetes" attach some sort of color-consciousness to the vowels of the alphabet, the names of persons and places, as also to odors. Most of us go no farther than to "feel blue" or observe the "loud" colors in a resplendent necktie. We have to leave to the veritably color-minded people the strange joy of translating tones, names, odors and the like into so many reds and blues and greens.

At the same time, a certain sort of color-mindedness is as necessary for the appreciation of painting as it is possible for the normal eye. When we are confused by the strange assortment of hues upon a coloristic canvas, we can turn aside for a moment from gay art and seek information from somber science. From popular physics and psychology, if not from common observation, we can seize the idea that the range of colors is limited to a sort of octave, or solfeggio. We realize this in the rainbow, or from a prism in the sunlight, or from the sight of oil floating on water. All we have to do now is to appreciate the appropriate combinations of which the artist will avail himself.

The colorist must recognize with us that the primary colors are red, yellow and blue; the secondary, green, orange, violet. Then there is purple, which is so appealing in the art of the day, as, for example, in the work of Maxfield Parrish.

Look at these colors sun-wise, and you appreciate the difference between the "warm" red, orange, yellow, and "cool" blue, green, violet. Furthermore, you can appreciate why an artist who is going to paint *The Isle of the Dead* will use blue and deep green in contrast with one who, in painting *The Burning of the Slave Ship*, will incline toward red and yellow. Then you feel that red, while a poor color physically, is a right one for the art which desires to express vigor and vitality; how yellow, so often used as a term of opprobrium, signifies gladness; how green is restful in its sylvan suggestions; and how demure and dignified is the tint of blue.

A picture will have its color-tone, golden, say, with Rembrandt, and silvery with Correggio, yet the artist must use special colors in due combination. There is the obvious contrast between red and blue, as these appear at the opposite ends of the spectrum. Then, better still, is the rich effect of the "complementary" colors—red and green, yellow and blue. We appreciate this, even in billboard advertising, in dress design, in selecting neckwear. We are conscious of the pleasing contrast and mutually reinforcing effect of these complementary colors, and can let science decide why it is so, let art make the most of it upon the canvas. We ourselves are simply cheered by the consciousness that we have such measure of artistic enlightenment as may come from esthetic enjoyment.

When we revisit the art gallery equipped with an intelligent color-sense, if not with chromesthesia, we are in a mood to measure the effect really producible by the colorists; the older ones, who were innocent of optic science, and the more modern painters, who have received instruction from the physicists.

There were Titian, Giorgione, Tintoretto, to mention a mere trio of veterans; there are Delacroix, Diaz, and Rousseau, among the many moderns who have felt the deep glow and spiritual significance of the chromatic. Then, of course, Rubens and Rembrandt in the northern Renaissance, the modern Impressionists and the contemporary painters who just lay the color on as if inspired by the idea of the plentifulness of pigments rather than by any display which Nature herself suggests. Sufficient for us is that, when culture would work its perfect way within us, we are now in the proper mood and attitude to appreciate painting as so much coloring.

LIGHT AND SHADE

Light and shade we appreciate, but do not understand as fully as the distinction between day and night. But between the glare of midday and the gloom of midnight, there are innumerable shades which are less easy to appreciate. When we look at our friend's face at a three-quarters view, we realize that the near, full side is bright, the far, restricted one dark. We observe the way the brow overshadows the face and the chin the throat. If we ourselves stand directly under a bright light, our image in the mirror reveals this effect more emphatically; ay, the light casts an air of nobility upon our own countenance.

This light-shade, or chiaroscuro, in art should be sincere and simple; nature herself achieves such marvels with light that art should be satisfied with naturalness. The original luminarists, however, were more symbolical and allegorical in their use of light. Leonardo uses it religiously when he lends due illumination to all of the disciples' faces save one—Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him, altho in the scene depicted the face of Judas is turned toward the window! The achieved effect was due to studio light and moral judgment, not to nature. So Correggio, who gets light from the face of the infant Christ in the manger rather than from the lanterns which the shepherds carry. So also, but not in such measure, of the great Hollander and his "Rembrandt lighting." We must let the names of these geniuses and the superiority of their art atone for their lack of naturalness.

Authentic lighting is a modern art, is appreciated in the works of the Barbizon school, and finds a superb apostle in Corot. Millet's *Angelus* blends the mood of religious devotion with a certain twilight effect and reveals a sense of gradation which only a contrite observer of nature could reproduce with his brush.

We laymen look chiefly for sunlight effects in painting, and can appreciate the problems presented to the naturalistic luminarist when the intensity of sunlight varies with the weather and diminishes with the passage of the sun toward the western horizon. Once we have grasped the light-shade principle as it shows itself gently in the country and strikingly, but harshly, in the built-up city, we are nearer our goal of culture through painting.

AIR HAS WEIGHT

Modern science made the remarkable discovery that "air has weight." Modern art, after the Renaissance, learned that air, in such volume as involved in a landscape, is observable and must be placed upon the canvas. The grand artists of the Italian Renaissance were as oblivious of air's weight as of its importance. But nature at that time was valued only as a background for important figures, so that aired landscapes could be neglected. Yet, look at some of these backgrounds, and you'll imagine that these old masters were almost Californian in their enthusiasm for the clarity of their native atmosphere. However, it was neglect rather than patriotism which led them to leave the air out and place airless landscapes upon their easels. We are wiser in the ways of nature; we observe objects suffused with air; and we expect the artist to represent something like the hazy atmosphere of real life.

The true painting is duly "enveloped." That is, the near-by object is dressed as it were in the lightest of aerial garments, while the remote one, seen through the curtain of real air, is suffused with it to the point of being swathed in atmosphere. But this does not mean mere differences of degrees of clearness. No, it involves the blurring of actual lines, so that a distant house does not seem to be built upon rectangular lines; a person down the street does not reveal eyebrows or other distinctive features; a leafed tree is only a blur of green, or blue or gray, as the case may be.

To place the object here or there in its own air and light is an art; to see it duly enveloped is likewise an art, and one which we laymen should cultivate. Then we are on something like a common footing with the naturalistic painter, colorist, luminarist or "aerialist."

PERSPECTIVE

In a certain sense, all these elements of painting—line, color, light, air—are summed up in perspective. In general we are familiar with the phenomenon, and may wonder why the primitive painters of Italy did not grasp its obvious meaning for art, but had to wait for the close of the *Quattrocento* to bring it to pass, in Leonardo. But our common conception of it is purely linear. It expresses itself in pairs of converging lines and makes the large, distant object appear small, the small, near-by one large. When common objects get out of proportion mathematically, they get into proportion through perspective. Yes, we are quite capable of such simple perspective. But there are other than these geometrical forms of the thing.

All told, the kinds of perspective include the linear and luminar, the chromatic and aerial. Lines and lights as well as masses of color and air produce this illusion of reality, or naturalness. We can draw a circle of comprehension, if only a narrow one, around our sense of perspective by falling back upon common perception. The distant object appears unusually small, but it is just as dim as it is small, for line and light make it appear diminutive and dark. The same remote thing observed through air is of an unusual hue. The blue has toned down to gray; the green hill in the background of the natural picture is bluish. If the celestial background is golden, all things set against it are purple—even the "purple cow," which we had never hoped to see. There is a blurring effect, and none of that uncanny clarity which one experiences in looking through a stereoscope.

Then appear strange compensations in the truly distorted view of the world. The large and small interchange sizes, while bright objects take on duller hues, leaving the originally drab ones to gather in, so to speak, the rich orange tint which distance places on them. Nature uses perspective with us when she lets the lens of the eye, if not the whole optical apparatus, see things in a convenient, comfortable way instead of making us grasp them in their absolute character. The artist will have to use his best devices to transfer this natural effect to his canvas, which has a limited area and presents only a flat surface where no distance is. No matter how remote the tower in the background of his picture, it is just as near his eye and hand as the very thing that juts out in the foreground. It is for him by artifice to solve the problem which is simple for the eye of the perceiving person.

PRACTICAL COMPOSITION

Composition in painting is less easy to define and discuss, but we are all aware of it as something peculiar to both common life and art. The way you arrange the furniture in your room is a problem of composition involving more than the mere convenience afforded by chair and divan. The chairs are placed here and there and not set in rows as tho you were arranging for a little lecture or recital. The idea is to arrive at a sort of studied disorder decided upon for artistic effect. The better the arrangement of the furniture for a practical purpose, the worse may be the arrangement for an artistic one. That is the problem of interior decoration.

The same idea must prevail with painted objects as with interior decoration or landscape-gardening, or even town-planning. The thing must be done with an eye to esthetic effect. You have that when you are dealing with things in their concreteness; you can use that when you are sizing up the effect of composition on a canvas. Between the actual adjustment of objects to be used, and painted things to be viewed, there is the mean of "stage setting" and the proper position of the caste in this or that scene. In all this, the scanning eye is probably the proper authority, and yet in composition on the canvas there is a sort of crudely physical principle which is dominant.

MUST BE APPRECIATED TO BE SEEN

In a word, there must be balance, as tho painting were like architecture and composition akin to an edifice. Certainly a painted chair should not be placed in the air a foot above the floor or a painted river flow along higher than the hill. Nor should a group of objects on one side of the canvas outweigh those on the other. We within ourselves as laymen cannot tell the painter how to perfect composition; we may have difficulty in furnishing a room or laying out a garden; but we are aware of mathematical proportion and mechanistic balance, and expect the painter to observe these obvious features of the natural world. We have the idea of art-technique fairly well in hand.

Some goods "must be seen to be appreciated"; most paintings "must be appreciated to be seen."

It is not sufficient merely to gaze upon them in astonishment or think about them with wonder. We must exercise a "knowing look." This comes about when eye and mind cooperate to produce criticism; not fault-finding, but appreciation, which is culture in connection with the art of painting. The subjects which the artist treats are matters of secondary concern for us. They belong to history or geography or life as observed. It is the technical treatment which counts. The art of the painter is expression; with the poet this is verbal, with the singer it is tonal, with us it is the secondary expression of appreciation.

The poet vents mood and intuition by means of images which speak their own language. The painter composes by means of line and light, color and air, which, in themselves mute, become eloquent upon the canvas. Now, it is the poet or painter in us, imprisoned by circumstance or lack of definite talent, who is liberated by what's written on the paper or laid upon the canvas. They achieve results in artistic satisfaction if not renown; we harvest our results in the form of personal culture. We can at least glean something from the rich field of art, even if it be only a modest bundle of golden grain gathered at the edges of the harvest field. With ultramodern art, even this is difficult.

XI. Armistice with Modern Art

XI

AN ARMISTICE WITH MODERN ART

ARTISTIC INSURRECTION

WHEN we desire to get the "point" in a painting, we center our gaze upon the subject-matter. Our interest concerns itself with the scene that confronted the artist or the person who posed for the painter. Does the picture now look as the scene looked then? If, however, our aim is more esthetical and cultured, we take landscape or figure as a matter of course and begin to look for line and color, atmosphere and composition. Subject is surmounted by technique; for it's the manner, not the matter, that counts.

When, therefore, we wish to become cultured through art, and not merely satisfied in our senses or learned in our ideas, we take firm steps in the direction of the studio. We are now enthusiastic over style, nonchalant about subject. But, in order to come abreast of the art of the nineteenth century, we must not only step but stride toward the painter's haunts; in so doing, we must bid farewell to all banality if not to common sense. This is because "modern painting," as inaugurated by Turner and Delacroix, Courbet and Daumier, and carried still farther by Cézanne and Picasso, is radical and revolutionary. Yet its art looks "strangely natural."

The cultured person may find it difficult to come to an understanding with the modern artist and view his canvas without blinking. What he sees there is painting, not art. He realizes that almost anybody can adore Raphael, whose place is secure and whose art is sanctioned by history as it is sanctified by religion. Almost anybody can admire Rubens, even when the canvases of this master are decidedly robust examples of coloring and composition. But it is not so easy for the eye to lend approval to paintings which seem to be beyond the pale, and which give the impression that the artist has removed the old landmarks. We cannot meet these ultra-artists eye to eye or match them mood for mood. They seem as erratic as their art looks exotic. It simply doesn't look like anything we have seen in our common world of experience.

WATCHFUL WAITING

In dealing with painting which is so *outré*, we may join the vast ranks of those who malign the new art or may enlist in the slender column of those who, flying to the other extreme, are enthusiastic beyond the limits of rationality. Or—which is wiser—we may agree upon an armistice with modern art and thus postpone our practical triumph over its rebellion or its esthetic victory over us. Without being Laodicean, we can avoid both extreme coldness toward one art and heat for another, while we wait for the spectacular artist to temper his canvas or the solid spectator to raise himself to the artistic height which such art demands as its point of view. Ours can be a policy of "watchful waiting" while these Mexicans of the studio carry on their revolution.

Our main difficulty with modern art is that the things upon the canvas do not look like anything we have ever seen before. If we were to behold what is supposed to be, but really is not—such an impossible thing as a "purple cow"—we could decide, at least, that in form it resembles a familiar object and is unrecognizable as to color only. But when it is just purpleness, or some other color effect, we cannot fall back upon our stock of impressions, however vast and varied, and hang the picture over the well-known object. For these modern pictures are not pictures of something, but just pictures.

PAINTINGS, NOT PICTURES

With a classic painting, one realized that, in the development of his work, the artist kept to the privacy of his studio where genius, technical talent and studio methods ruled autocratically. But when the painting was finished, the work of art showed that the artist was a natural and social being after all, since he held up before the eyes of the world a representation of some object in the natural order. Of course, certain features of the painting might be lost to us—Raphael's line of dignity, Titian's coloring, Rembrandt's lighting, and Rubens's method of composition: but these manners of the painter did not divorce us from the subject-matter of his canvas; we were still able to draw a circle of appreciation around his picture. But, with modern art, this is not the case.

Modern art seems to proceed, one might say, from one studio to another, or from artist to artist; it does not come out into the open light of general appreciation by the public. This is to say in roundabout fashion that modern art is individualistic. It presents what just this artist saw at this time or reveals what he felt in a certain mood, not what all may see or feel.

Your modern painter has a secret and he keeps it. We may conjecture within ourselves, but he will not communicate, so that, in a certain sense, a modern painting is a cross-word puzzle. We are supposed to contribute something of our own to the canvas; not a touch added by our hand, but a glance loaned by our eye. The modern artist seems to say, "Now, this is what I saw and the way I felt; if you can see and feel the same, you are welcome to the glory of my work, but art is really for the artist's sake."

ART, NOT ILLUSTRATION

The first factor encountered in this modern art is a negative one. The painter decides that his picture shall no longer be an illustration. Turner and Delacroix turn away from the objects that they might have represented in order to portray color-effects, as tho it were art for color's sake. Renoir and Cézanne did deal in objects, but their apparent aim was to present these in such a palpable way as to overcome the psychological habit of viewing solid objects from the standpoint of this or that surface.

There is, then, with these artists, portrayal of the voluminous quality which a real object possesses, and which, in full air, it reveals. One appreciates this sense of the voluminous in such paintings as *The Bathers*, by Renoir, or *Apples on a Table*, by Cézanne. Before them, Daumier had succeeded in perfecting the idea of depth and solidity without using perspective as a mere device. According to W. H. Wright, in *Modern Painting*, "Depth with other painters was obtained by carrying their figures into the background by the means of line and perspective. With Daumier it meant a plastic building up of volume from the background forward."

ART AND NOTHING ELSE

With these most substantial of the modern artists there is a nucleus of common sense, as we might call it, but still the aim of the advanced painter is to avoid any attempt to represent a recognizable object. That would be mere illustration and would prevent painting, as was so long its unhappy fate, from coming into its own as an independent art.

It is in just this that the secret of modern painting is to be found, and, expressed in a positive way, it means simply that the painter wants his work to be art and nothing else. He cannot actually build anything after the manner of architecture, or form a tangible object with an existence of its own; but he may be able to fashion forms in such ways as to yield the impression of solidity, so that the picture may be a kind of thing-in-itself.

The most intelligible statement of this aim is found in an expression used by Cézanne, who may be accepted as the spokesman for the new movement. He said it was the attempt to "realize" objects, and not merely represent them. This attempt at realization, as discussed by Wright, is carried out by an act of "penetration" through which one sees into the actual form an object assumes, the essential it adopts.

The practical person, who is not an adept at art or even inclined to admire the efforts of the most sophisticated artists, can learn this direct but difficult lesson of "realization by penetration." From long, practical experience with objects as useful instruments, we have come to regard them symbolically in such ways as to accept the idea that a ball is round, the grass green, a cube bounded by flat surfaces; and that the human face and form rejoice in certain features and curves. Now, while this is well enough for an active view of things as usable objects, it is not sufficient as an artistic view of these same things when their forms and colors are to be realized. The active view would yield material for geometry and physics, but not for painting; it would yield science, but not art.

ARTISTIC INACCURACY

Modern art is far removed from science, especially the science which through photography gives an accurate reproduction of the object. This "accuracy" is the one thing perhaps above all others that the modern painter would avoid. It will be well to repeat here what amounts to the silent slogan of the ultra-painter—"No recognition of the recognizable."

However, altho the painter is out of touch with the physicist when it comes to treating the objects of experience, he is akin to the apostle of the new physics in that his conception of nature requires elucidation. We have awakened to the startling realization that, in our dealings with space and time, we cannot proceed merely by extending and refining our perceptions of these universal forms. We must, if possible, have recourse to a scheme of Relativity in which, among other and more complicated things, space has a temporal character and time a spatial form.

Just this mere mention of our leading science will suffice to credit the idea that, in the art of modern painting, the obvious perception of the world in space and time is not sufficient to admit us to the secret of the new art. There must be, to repeat, Cézanne's power of penetration with the aim of realizing the object whose form and color are enigmatical.

Here appears the Relativity of modern painting. Line and color are not absolute but relative and complementary. "Drawing and color are not distinct," said Cézanne, as quoted in Wright's work. "As one paints, one draws. The more the colors harmonize, the more precise is the drawing. When color is richest, form is at its plenitude." This is of course quite different from the conventional conception of painting, where the artist is supposed to do no more than fill in with color the spaces his lines have indicated.

The aim of a painter like Cézanne was, as he said, to "modulate" rather than "model," because of the fact that form and color so interact that changes in one mean changes in the other. Where there is no such modulation, the painting will not look right, except perhaps in just one kind of light. The aim of this painter, whose work at first seemed "impossible," was to preserve the constant variations of color, light and form so that all of them would move together. The discovery of this relativity and the realization of it in all the gradations of light was the supreme work of Cézanne.

THE LACK OF PRETTINESS

In the instance of lesser painters, some before and some after Cézanne in the modern school, the type of art engendered was that of device rather than principle. Hence it is in connection with these artistic experimenters that we may best use the expression, "An armistice with modern art." We note their aims and these we can applaud; we observe their results, but are inclined to defer judgment until either they or we have changed.

It is in their case, with both color and form, that common-sense criticism may complain that their paintings do not look like anything. In addition to this lack of naturalness, there is in modern art a painful disdain for that prettiness which we expect to find upon a canvas. Both the recognizable and enjoyable are absent; the representative and picturesque. This is not quite the case with the originators of the new art, for Turner and Delacroix please with their effects of light and color, just as Courbet and Daumier gratify our common-sense desire to behold something we can recognize.

The starting-point of the most ultramodern art is signalized by indifference to the subject of the painting; it is that preference for technique in place of subject-matter which marks the progress of painting from the Renaissance to the present, and which widens the gap between "artist" and "painter." When one looks upon a picture done in the old style, he observes a scene, figure or portrait in which form and color, light and air are subordinate to the object that is presented. But when he turns to a modern painting, he beholds a display of studio methods according to which the recognizability of the object portrayed is at a minimum.

Indeed, one who is anxious to make the distinction between old painting and new, might go so far as to say that it depends upon the amount of pigment employed. For the old master painter used a small amount of paint to produce a thin picture: the modern artist requires several times as much in his desire to create a thick canvas. The subject of the painting may be buried beneath this mass of pigment, but it matters not, as long as the painter can use his paint to develop and display his technical manner.

IMPRESSIONISM

In this present Armistice with Modern Art, it will be sufficient to consider only the extremes of Impressionism and Cubism, with their respective exaggeration of color and distortion of form. The two tendencies are in themselves opposed, but they agree in departing from classic examples as also from common-sense perception.

Our sense of color in nature as we behold it in our temperate zone presents us with mild chromatic effects. Impressionism wishes us to observe something prismatic, startling, fragmentary. Likewise, in our habitual appreciation of form, we are accustomed to free, flowing curves observed in the human form and exalted by classic sculpture. Cubism would have us appreciate the hard and solid effects of bodies, as tho the human body were appreciated better in the form of crude wood-carving than in a delicately molded statue. We may reject the results of such exaggerated, distorted painting, but we may admit the principles on which it is based. They are the principles of human perception in which the eye observes a confusing variety of tints broken up into colored fragments, just as it perceives objects massively, or *en bloc*, even in the smoothly organized human body. Such art is thus of a psychological nature.

In our desire to come to an understanding with Impressionism, we can admit that most of the classic canvases look somewhat drab. We desire to lay on color in dress and decoration, and hence are often disappointed when what is considered great art is lacking in vivid tone. This is not the case in nature as observed in her special moods; sea and sky, a flower-garden or meadow tinted with wild flowers produce the color effects that we seem to desire instinctively.

Titian saw something of this, and so did Rubens; Delacroix and Turner appreciated it far more fully. The Impressionists saw nothing else but the possibility of tinted light, with its polychromatic, if not pyrotechnic, effects. They saw, just as we see, that light is ephemeral, so that our common view of objects is now bright, then dark, here golden, there purple. It is just this varied, fickle character of the landscape which the Impressionist would depict for us.

In a certain sense, it is *our* landscape, since it reveals what we see as we glance about; ours, likewise, in the sense that our own eyes must fuse the tints of red and green, yellow and blue as they are laid on the canvas. We are ourselves "impressionists" in that we observe bits of light and blocks of color and then interpret them as sunset, a red apple mid the green leaves, the colored light and shade of the human face. But we are accustomed to have the artist work these effects through to the point of actual perception; hence, when the Impressionist lays before us the native material of our own perceptions in the form of separate sensations, we are disconcerted by the overnaturalness of his canvas.

CUBISM

Much the same may be said of the extreme naturalness of Cubism. We may come to a provisional understanding with it by realizing that our natural perception observes objects in a massive way, and it is only because we have analyzed and often measured them in an exact, geometrical manner that we keep looking for linear effects. The line-idea of objects is intellectual and formal; the cube-conception is sensational and natural. Indeed, when Cubism as such is employed as means of achieving pictorial effect, as in the case of a figure in an advertisement, we are unconscious of the artist's technique. For we are off our guard and in a natural state of mind accept such natural distortion, or unanalyzed perception, as something quite in our own manner.

When, however, a professional Cubist, as we might call him, distorts this block-method, and seems to paint the human face and form as one might try to fashion it out of building blocks, we feel that he has gone far beyond the possibilities of natural perception. In Picasso's *Woman with* *a Mandolin*, for example, where are the natural curves; where the "line of beauty," where the rounded masses of flesh which make the body both natural and artistic? One feels that such a Cubist's work has just begun, and that out of these solids he should form a figure capable of organic existence, if nothing else. Likewise, in the case of *A Nude Descending a Staircase*, or *Fumeur et Paysage* by Léger, one is bound to receive the impression of a jigsaw puzzle scrambled.

However, as we have seen, the cultured person who desires to sympathize with ultramodern art may start with the Cubist in the mutual acceptance of our solid perceptions, but part company with him when he proceeds toward mechanical distortion instead of natural organization.

FUTURISM

The tone of modern life is such that we have come to demand startling color and solid impressions. We may be superficial in our beliefs and thoughts, but we are now accustomed to massive, colorful sensations. Then, likewise, we are dynamic in our desire for movement. The automobile and moving picture, if nothing else, have engendered this desire.

Now, it is Futurism which has arisen in response to our kinesthetic sense, for Futurism is really "dynamism." If we analyze painting as an art, we realize that it is bound to be something static in that the figure is placed upon the canvas to stay in just its given position. However, we are accustomed to associate movement with the stationary, as when, in a cartoon, the glance from the eye is represented by a dotted line toward the object viewed; when lines drawn behind a moving object, as a missile, seem to represent its path, or when the familiar fall of the victim of the joke is indicated by abrupt lines drawn behind him. A better example of such dynamism is findable in the wake of a vessel under full sail or a full head of steam.

Our common-sense perceptions tend to justify such a dynamic view by means of the after-image. A flying meteor seems to leave a path of light behind it; a rocket will be followed by a bright path of light, not all of which is of physical origin. Hence, the common phenomenon of the after-image helps us in our attempted appreciation of futuristic dynamism.

But what takes place in the air cannot so easily be transferred to the canvas. We see the movement as a matter of optics, sense it as an emotional thrill, and appreciate it generally as a phase of our human experience. When the perception of movement in nature occurs, and when it is represented simply and symbolically in the comic drawing, we are in a mood to appreciate it; but such is not the case when the Futurist attempts to translate dynamism and place it upon a canvas. There we find only confusion worse confounded, because the harmonious movements of bodies following natural laws are turned into a chaos due to unintelligent perception.

A painting, which exists in space, is bound to present all of its impressions simultaneously. Movement, which takes place in time, operates according to the impression of successiveness. Time can and does infuse its dynamic character into space, where it serves as a fourth dimension for geometry. Such a temporalized space can be enjoyed by means of the cinematograph, where a rapid succession of photographs which fit together serves to create the practical impression of movement. But when these impressions are given simultaneously, so that the pictures we should see at different moments are observed at the same time, there is no physical analogy or artistic result. The possible movement must be studied out about as the cause of a railroad collision is discovered in the wreckage of the trains. The picture which attempts this becomes something cryptic or hieroglyphic, and it is with something of this sort in mind that the Futurist, Severini, styled one of his paintings *Hieroglyphe Dynamique du Bal Tabarin*.

RELATIVITY IN PAINTING

However, in dealing with ultramodern painting as a means of esthetic culture, and in balancing accounts with Impressionism, Cubism and Futurism, to say nothing of Synchronism, one may give tentative, qualified approval to the nouveau tendency.

Again it is a matter of adopting first principles without necessarily accepting results. Among these primary principles which the new art attempts to exemplify is the mutual interpenetration of space and time, which themselves form the field of all the fine arts. This interweaving of space-points and time-instincts is a fact we recognize, however dimly, when we realize that a tree or human body which we see in a sort of timeless here-and-now is something which has come to be what it is only through the passage of years or decades. The general appreciation of this renders us sympathetic toward Relativity in both science and art, in both physics and painting.

An additional blending of things we are prone to consider separately appears in the fusion of form and color. The artist of the Renaissance was sometimes a draftsman and sometimes a colorist, yet he realized that line and tint must coexist. The student of Renaissance painting appreciates form in Michelangelo and color in Titian, to mention great artists who worked, one might say, competitively. One sees, further, how certain other artists of that great era made the attempt to combine Angelo's line with Titian's color, as was the case with such a man of talent as Tintoretto, as was the more eminent instance of such a genius as Rubens. But it was the cooperation of form and color, introduced by Delacroix and perfected by Cézanne, which made modern art something novel and distinctive.

THE FORCE OF FUSION

These two major fusions—of space and time, form and color—have been brought about in response to a demand for truly modern impressions. While these ultramoderns were initiating a new art, the scientists of the past and present centuries were inaugurating a biology and a new physics, observable in Evolution and Relativity. It was not necessary or even possible for the modern painter to depict life as something that had evolved, or matter as something existing in the new world of space-time; but the extreme modernism of the physical was bound to be accompanied by something similar in the field of painting.

The world of our experience looks just the same as it did to man thousands of years ago, but with a new science we are bound to sense or intuit it differently, or with greater depth of sensation. Now, modern art, with all its aggravations, is of value to culture in the way that the new canvas reflects a new consciousness.

THE PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD MODERN ART

The cultured person must not be content to have a mere gallery acquaintance with these new masters of an old art, nor, on the other hand, should he feel distressed because he lacks familiarity with studio modes. Let him delight in color as displayed by Delacroix, in form as realized by Cézanne or in the brilliance of Signac. Then he need not affect enthusiasm over any brush-work of Van Gogh or the solidified effects of Picasso.

Far better is it to neglect the studio and quit the gallery after a brief visit for the sake of intuiting nature with one's own eyes. Let the artist who has his superiority of vision teach us how to see our modern world, but let us do this with our eyes of flesh. Culture from the art of painting cannot come from a canvas except as this dull medium which the painter uses reflects the picture which we ourselves can see in full air.

As far as modern art itself is concerned, we can do no better than sign the armistice that has been suggested. It seems strange that our contemporaries should be so far removed from us or we from them, but maybe we are behind the times. We are still lingering with the old masters, who used their talents to perfect the pictorial and illustrative; and here are these moderns who insist that painting shall be an art in its own right. What shall we do with them? They can be laughed at no longer, but must be taken into account.

Perhaps we can do no better than to consider them experimenters who distort and exaggerate with the hope of finding their way into a new world of painting. "Art," as Prosper Merimée said, "is exaggeration *à propos*." With the hypermodern painter, there can be doubt about the exaggeration, but some question as to the appropriateness of it. But maybe in time we'll grow accustomed to the Cubist and see our world in the way he strives to represent it.

XII. Poetry and Every-Day Life

XII

POETRY AND EVERY-DAY LIFE

POETRY THE MIND OF ART

POETRY is the most universal of the fine arts and the most obvious means of culture. In the life of beauty, the other arts may be likened to the body of which poetry is the mind. This mental character of poetry, or the literary art, is due to the fact that its medium is language whose meanings are direct, or immediately derivable. We know or can find out what the literary artist expresses, since we in our way use the same linguistic medium which he refines and elaborates in verse or story.

Poetry is thus the prime means of culture; it is cultivated in countries like England and America, where the other arts are far less eminent. Indeed, one might venture to assert that poetry is the only art of the Anglo-American mind.

In the long history of culture, the other arts have arisen stage after stage in such a way as to form a kind of pyramid. Art began in Asia and Egypt in the form of gigantic architecture, as tho some primitive force, working through man's hand, had continued its work of mountain-building in such monstrous structures as the Great Pyramid and the Taj Mahal.

With architecture as its basis, art advanced to sculpture, an art still solid, but smaller, more refined. Such was the later work of the Greeks. In the development of Christian culture, one sees again the working of crude but noble forces in cathedral architecture, Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic, accompanied by crude sculpture.

But then, as if of a sudden, came the painting of the Renaissance within a smaller, thinner field of beauty. The solidity of architecture and sculpture gave way before the superficial form of an art still spatial, but more representative of objects than real in itself.

IT MEANS WHAT IT SAYS

The art of music came as the climax of the arts, assuming a spiritual, or unreal, character even when its form is thoroughly sensuous, its appeal emotional. Like music, poetry is an art which exists in time only where it expresses its meaning in the flow of language, word after word, as music proceeds tone upon tone.

It has been the fate of poetic art, as Hegel pointed out, to accompany the other, less intelligible arts and speak for them. From the massive beauty of pyramid or cathedral, one may infer beauty, culture, spiritual life. In the shapeliness of a Venus or Apollo, one may see the esthetic meaning more clearly. Painting is expressive of the objects it depicts, so that we recognize the artist's general aim. But in comparison with the most articulate art, music is nobly unintelligible, so that he who hears poetry read may be said to gather all its meaning, while he who listens to music played can gather none.

The intelligible, articulate character of poetry, which makes it the universal art, can be both a blessing for the mind and a bane for the esthetic sense. Poetry is bound to have meaning, since that is the genius of language; but we should look to it to supply more of a feast for the senses than food for thought. If there is to be information, reasoning and proof, the writer should avail himself of prose, and produce science, history, philosophy. It is only when, with a minimum of fact and rationality, the writer aims to please the senses, arouse one's sense of rhythm and stimulate emotion, that true poetry can live.

There is, of course, something historical in Homer and Vergil, Roland and Dante, Shakespeare and Milton, but the cultural value of their poetry is verbal, not factual; a matter of form rather than content, the sensuous but not the rational. Now, the appreciation of the non-rational character of a rational art is necessary if poetry is to be placed alongside the other arts. What the poet had to say has been so fully realized in the history of literature that it is well to emphasize, perhaps exaggerate, his thoughtless, sensuous way of saying it.

POETRY AND PRIMITIVE LIFE

When man was primitive, poetry was part of his every-day life. Philosophical reflection had yet to come; scientific analysis was undreamed of. There was no distinction between poetry and prose or literature and life, for language rejoiced in charming looseness of expression. One feels this in the organized poetry of Hindu and Hebrew: in the Vedas and Psalms, in Sanskrit epics and Semitic histories. For these primitive poems are innocent of exact statements and exhaustive meanings. Their naïve authors judged of life's blue depth by what they saw upon its shining surface. It is only when we of the scientific era and sophisticated age can strip our minds of their knowledge and enjoy the naked contact with the waters of life that we can read poetry.

It requires no elaborate argument to evince the fact that ours is not a poetic age. Poetic objects have been displaced by modern improvements. No one who lives under a tiled roof could care to dwell under a thatched one. Nor would one who boasts an eight-cylinder car be satisfied to travel by cart or chaise. Who cares for a blazing hearth, or depends upon its warmth, in an age of radiators, or resorts to the natural refrigeration of a spring when manufactured frigidity is accessible?

Our ancestors voyaged in barques where we sail in steamships, and journeyed on back of camel or horse where we prefer our Pullmans. In matters of dress, helmet, doublet, sandal, cape and hose are outmoded, and we go about attired in manufactured clothes made wholesale upon the same pattern. This change from the era of poetry to the age of comfort, from the esthetic to the useful, is not to be regretted except as it entails an artistic loss which modern existence may not be able to redeem.

In the act of writing poetry, the modern must forego his modern advantages and forget his sophistication. Only as we ourselves become as children can we enter that kingdom. The language of the poem must be antique. One's historical memory must supply the vocabulary of things that once were common parlance. There is poetry in the very mention of thatched roof, stage-coach, broad hearth, light barque, and sandals; in the objects that have taken their place, all poetry is interrred. The time may come when the objects peculiar to the age of industry, the vulgar things of steel and concrete, of gas and electricity, may acquire a poetic halo; but it is wiser tho more melancholy to assume that the things and thoughts and words of poetry are gone, except as they exist in memory.

THE PRESENT DEMAND FOR POETRY

But, in spite of the pathetic fact that poetry is a lost art, there is now a demand for a touch of the poetical in these drab days of prose. This shows itself in the daily poem, which, in a way, is as necessary to the newspaper reader as the weather report, the market prices, baseball scores, and news items generally.

In a certain sense, we live in an age of poetic demand, altho not one of poetic supply. This demand for verse may be due to the rhythm which our industrial life assumes under the harsh auspices of machinery. When, half a century ago, machinery was imperfect, it was expected that a culturist like Matthew Arnold should deplore its effects upon lives seeking "sweetness and light." But with the acquired smoothness of our present machinery, it may be that we are beginning to feel anew the old poetic spirit in a new form. Nevertheless, one must be a perfect optimist to believe in the poetic possibilities of mechanized existence.

Doubtless it is wiser to conclude that the present demand for poetry, which is a much more favorable sign than the desire for manufactured entertainment, is due to contrast. We feel that life, action and business are being overworked, so that a dash of rime in the news acts as a dash of cold water on the face. Our primitive ancestors bathed in such poetic beauty just as they cleansed themselves in streams and brooks. We, their prosaic children, seek cleansing and refreshing in a sort of poetic shower-bath. This is reflected in journalism, with its "features" and "human-interest stuff." We readers of political and criminal news require "art," which is provided by the cartoon and comic strip, as also by the daily poem, which is usually humorous or sentimental. It matters not of what sort the poem is; it is sufficient to realize that the modern needs the bard as well as the business man.

SLANG AS POOR MAN'S POETRY

Modern life, banal and often brutal as it is, has its own longing for poetry among its modern sensations. History has buried Homer and Shakespeare, but there are those who still visit the poetic graves. Poetic words survive, if only in the dictionaries, where they are marked "poetical" or "obsolete."

But, as there is a kind of poetry in modern life, so there is a species of the poetical in modern language. And since we desire to conserve such natural resources as we possess, we tap a certain poetic spring found in slang. There are, of course, species of slang, or argot, known to and employed by certain groups who either pride themselves on their special "lingo," or find it expedient to use it as a semi-secret tongue. Such particular professional slang is heard among actors, students, criminals and others. On the stage, a play may be a "flop." On the campus, the student may "flunk." In criminal haunts, the place to be avoided is the "cooler." These are striking but ugly examples of bastard poetry. Their form is that of harsh metaphor.

More public slang abounds in metaphor and metonomy. The apparent aim is to abbreviate elaborate forms of expression into crisp terms, but the bit of slang is often as neat as it is short. The very words, campus and stage, are examples of part-for-whole poetico-slangy expression. In the larger, busier world, who would hesitate to refer to a great financial system of speculation and investment, of brokers' loans and bankers' discounts, as other than Wall Street, or The Street? Then why not refer to those who trade there as Bulls and Bears?

These terms are short and convenient, but something other than the desire for abbreviation and convenience urges us to talk in such pictorial ways. Our truly poetical ancestors spoke of Jupiter Pluvius, Æolus and Iris; of Neptune, Aurora and Luna. The best we can do in referring to the weather is to speak of the Weather Man. They, too, in their delightful ignorance of mind, made Apollo the symbol of intellect and Dionysus of mind in its baser forms. Our best attempt at psychological symbolism is made by the mere mention of Freud and Jung. But with our boasted practicality we are still susceptible to poetical influence, and form figures as often as we can find suitable analogies.

POPULAR METAPHORS

The scientific language of physical and political geography may satisfy the learned, but we prefer less pedantry, and so make reference to the land of pine or palms; of Cotton Belt and Granite State; the Hub and Windy City. Our athletes perform on diamond or gridiron; the even less refined ones in the ring. Our baseball teams are given tender names, as Cardinals and Orioles, altho others have to be called Cubs and Tigers.

Scarcely anything is more influential in a political conflict than effective metaphors, altho politics itself is not akin to poetics. The favorite candidate is "First in War, First in Peace." Or it may be, "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too." At times, it may be a battle of images, as "The Cross of Gold" versus "The Full Dinner Pail." Of late, the poetical spirit in politics has been as weak as the platforms of the parties. "He Kept Us Out of War" was only a plain statement of what was then a fact, while "Keep Cool with Coolidge" was strangely superfluous as a bit of advice.

THE POET AS "MAKER"

This reference to the slang and slogan form of modern poetry is only an intimation of the practical force which poetry, as such, conceals within its esthetic forms. It is the very human, almost animalistic, form of poetry which should be stressed by those who have ever regarded verse as something exquisite to the point of inaccessible refinement or superiority. In fact, poetry is the expression of our glorious crudeness, and is never better than when it indulges in amiable brutality. The very term, *poiein*, which means to make, is an indication of the power and practicality involved in the poetic principle. The etymology of the term must not lead us into absurd analogies, yet it may carry us along to the point where we can observe the poetry of modern activity in the rhythm of machinery.

If, then, the act of "making" things in a harmonious manner is the animating spirit of poetry, we might venture the suggestion that a suspension bridge spanning a broad river or a skyscraper towering over a town is an example of poetic making. The exact art involved is more architectural than poetical, yet the amiable assembling of parts to form the whole and the suave effect of the structure are capable of suggesting, as it were, a sort of suspended or arrested versification, so that the thing so nobly fashioned forms a kind of poem. When industry uses its poetic power to create such animated things as a train of cars or a steamship, the poetic *motif* is even more apparent.

There is, of course, a vast difference, and one not to be spanned, between the *Iliad* and the Woolworth Building, between Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* and a sport roadster. Hence, one who stresses the similarity between the ancient act of "making" out of words and the modern one of "making" out of things runs the risk of the ridiculous. Nevertheless, when the poetic principle is reduced to its human origin, rather than carried forward to its various results, it may appear that the spirit which animated the ancient poet has come forth anew in the creative spirit of engineering. For poetry in the largest sense of the term is not the use of chosen words in esthetic forms, but the exhibition of balance, the exemplification of rhythm.

REAL VERSE ROBUST

The present conception of poetry as a necessary phase of human life may appear so realistic as to be brutal, but it is of some value to point out that poetry is not a delicious art practised by fond and effeminate souls, but something vigorous and masculine. The typical picture of the bard is that of a dreamy young man dallying with words and dawdling over rimes. But a more authentic conception of the poet is that of a mature and masculine mind working with the strength of a wright in the arduous work of beating his poem out of golden language, or making his verses from words as block-like things. To visualize the busts of old Homer and Sophocles, survey the solemn features of Dante and Milton, and consider the portraits of Shakespeare and Goethe, is to receive the impression of beetling brow and bearded jaw borne by men of action, whose energies fared forth word-wise as they might have gone out into work.

From Homer to Walt Whitman, a pair of bearded and benign brutes, the real bards have shown themselves real makers, or "doers of the word." There have indeed been slender minds of lyric disposition, but these could not bear the brunt of verse. For, as pointed out by Taine, such romantic poets as Byron, Shelley, Keats so exhausted their powers in poetry as to die before their time.

From such examples of poets who could and could not stand the strain of song, we may return to our original assumption that poetry is a form of abridged, intensified action, which calls upon the soul to put forth creative power. Poetry as the art which flowers from this fermentation may rejoice in delicious details, but the spiritual source of the thing is deep and Dionysian; something of the earth and the animal nature of man. It is from a dark soil that the flowers of poetry bloom in their colorful prettiness.

NO "BOOK OF VERSES UNDERNEATH THE BOUGH"

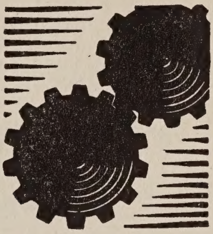
When, therefore, one wishes or wills to wrest culture from poetry, he must be booted and spurred for the chase or accoutered for the encounter. Of course, there are many who will think of poetic culture as "a book of verses underneath the bough," but the real reading of poetry is as serious as business or factory labor. We put herculean energy into tennis and golf; we must have as much muscular esthetics at our avail if we intend to master a sonnet or ode.

One should read poems with his shoes on, in the spirit of a man going out for a walk, not in slippers as tho one were preparing for bed. A book of verses beneath the vacation boughs or a volume of poems beside the bed may be read, but only after the manner of the words which lie on the surface of a spiritual stream whose currents are strong as its depths are dark. Only as one is himself a "maker" of some sort can he hope to grasp the meaning of a poem as something made.

We must come to the realization that poetry is nothing exceptional nor the poet a privileged person. Nature is rhythmical and man poetical. Prose is the exceptional mode of speech, and is found in legal documents and the *Congressional*

Record. The language of the street and home, of the newspaper and magazine, is that of incipient or arrested poetry, just as the mental attitude of the average citizen is that of the bard. The professional poet polishes our rough diamonds and harmonizes our imperfect themes. But we who make up the rank and file, and who comprise the majorities or minorities of our respective parties, are only Homers and Shakespeares of so many removes from the realm of verse.

XIII. Poetry and Modern Sensation



XIII

POETRY AND MODERN SENSATION

AN EAR FOR POETRY

THE conception of poetry as something primitive and powerful, and so popular as to have an affinity for slang, must be followed up by the parallel idea of poetry as something sensuous. For, that which has a kind of physical origin is bound to express its genius in the animal nature of man.

This is not to deny, but only to delay, the more orthodox notion of poetry as something consisting of *exquisite sentiments uttered by a bard under the influence of ecstasy*. Now, the exquisite and ecstatic are findable in much poetry, but they are flowers that bud on hardy plants. The direct appeal of verse is to sensations,—auditory, kinesthetic, visual, if not to the senses of smell and taste; when the sincere character of poetry is overlooked, the poet speaks in vain.

The first sense to feel the force of poetry is the ear. The poem was made to be recited or read aloud, and really has no more meaning in printed form than a sonata in the form of a score. Both sonnet and sonata must be sounded, or their letter will kill the spirit that giveth life. There is, of course, the rhythm that our senses seem to touch and share, as well as the pictorial quality of the visualized figure, but the tonal effect is best considered as primary.

In order to be sure that poetical effect is tonal, we may observe that a poem in a language foreign to our minds, if read well, gives sufficient satisfaction to our ears. When the poem is read in the mother tongue, we are inclined to believe that it's the meaning of the thing that charms our souls; but in truth this rationalistic factor often masks or drowns out the poetic appeal which is being made to the sensuous ear.

The recognition of this sound-quality is found in the use of onomatopœia, an unwieldy word that strives to inform us that we like words which the onomatopoetic word, like "whizz" or "crash" sound like the things they signify. Unfortunately, or "boom," is more onomatic than poetic, so that the finest effect of tonal poetry is achieved by no such childish means.

No, the sound-effect of language is experienced after habit has instilled certain ideas into symbolic words, so that the effect upon ear and heart is registered immediately, without any rationalistic interpretation. In prose discourse, the sound of the word is subordinate to the significance, so that when we hear a word like "authenticity" we hold the sound just long enough to have us grasp its meaning. In poetry, on the other hand, the significance of the word is subordinate to its sound, hence we use its meaning as nothing more than the vehicle for the sensuo-emotional effect.

The warm tone of a word like "glowing," the smooth effect of the word "love," and the comfortable sound of the term "home" are registered immediately and without controversy.

MORE RIME THAN REASON

But our rationalistic habits are so firmly fixed, and the mere symbolism of words is so customary, that it is difficult for us to realize that with the poet it's the manner, not the matter. He is only saying in a mellifluous way what everybody knows. If he were introducing new ideas in physics and psychology, we should have to familiarize our minds with his ideas and then reread the poem as a work of sensuous art. The meaning of the poem, the stanza, the line? What is the "meaning" of the *Iliad* in comparison with the *Republic*? What was Shakespeare's idea in comparison with that of Copernicus? What notion of Vachel Lindsay's fits into the science of the day? There are superior sounds and other sensations in such poems, but the ideas they must needs involve can be considered negligible.

Examples of saying the obvious in the sweetest manner, so as to please the senses without puzzling the brain, are innumerable; hence one cannot hope to cite any sufficient number of them. But the repetition of a pair of these from the poetry of Shakespeare, who bears such a brunt of poetry, may serve as illustrations. Romeo wishes to tell Juliet that it is now morning, and hence he must depart; and so he states that obvious fact:

Look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone!

Or Hamlet would ask Horatio not to commit suicide, but to live on and justify the life of his friend, which was both good advice and a reasonable request:

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.

Now, the meanings involved in these incomparable flowers of poetry are but as seeds for the poetic plant.

There are, of course, more metaphysical but no better verses than those of Shakespeare, but they cannot sustain their abstractions indefinitely. They must acknowledge their allegiance to sense as the soil in which their lofty thoughts are rooted. Goethe passes from peak to peak of ideas in that part of *Faust* which versifies such transcendental things as "*das Vergängliche*," "*Unzulänglich*," "*Unbeschreibliche*," but at last he returns to the mother earth of poetry and makes sincere reference to "Womanhood Eternal—*das ewig' Weibliche*." Shelley, too, exhibited considerable philosophy for a young Englishman, as one realizes from only a cursory reading of his odes *To a Sky-*

lark, *To the West Wind;* but the ideas of life and death thus vouchsafed in verse are properly enveloped in felt sensations about the "blithe spirit" of the bird, are fairly breathed in the importunate question, "Oh, wind! If winter comes can spring be far behind?"

TONE AND RHYTHM

The tonal quality of the recited poem involves more than the sound of separate words, altho such polysyllabic words as "harmonious," "mellifluous" and "gentleness" have lyric value. What the ear desires of sounds is their rhythmic arrangement in sustained form, whether in prose or poetry. Rhythm itself seems to contain the idea of balance, or the tone and countertone of words rather than mere succession. In this is one of the major moods of all art.

In architecture, an art so fundamental, balance appears in response to a thoroughly physical demand, since the structure as builded must be able to stand. The Grecian method of balanced building was simple and direct: the columnar support of base and column and capital met the down force of the entablature with its architrave, frieze and cornice. It is in the Gothic style that balance, achieved by the thrust and counterthrust of arch and buttress, is so glorified as to encourage us in urging the analogy between "making" with stones and "making" with words. It may be sentimental to style such architecture "frozen music," as did Goethe or Madame de

Staël, but there is something more than romance in using the idea of balance to effect the similarity between temple and poem.

BEAUTY AND BALANCE

Poetic balance appears again in the art of sculpture, where there is something of the statics of architecture; then, in plastic art there is that quality of rhythm which appears in lines and curves, planes and solids. These are expected of the human form as we know it, but not so readily do we look for the rhythmic likeness of poetic and plastic art. Composition in painting necessitates the organization of figures in such a way as to acknowledge the real mechanics of things in their purely representative form. Musical art, like poetic, is thoroughly rhythmic, and without such tonal balance harmony and melody would be in vain.

In addition to the rhythmic sense of balance in the arts, there is just as much of this in nature —in the obvious form of action and reaction, cause and effect. Hence, from what we have experienced as things among things of this world, to say nothing of what we have found in the fine arts, we are in a settled mood to appreciate balance of line and line if not of word and word. There's a loveliness about a poem, with its power to arouse the heart and enhance emotion; but there is at the bottom of the brain, so to speak, an elemental desire to have the poem operate after the manner of things and arts generally.

POETIC PARELLELISM

An eminent example of this basic demand for poetic balance is to be found in Hebrew parallelism, as this appears in the Psalms. The poem is only a gentle reminder of things already known. Then, such parallelistic poetry, enhanced by the sense of balance, repeats in the second part of the verse the thing already said; repeats with synonymous words or by citing similar things and events. There is a touch of this in the primitive poem known as *The Song of Deborah*, in which the carnal mind exalts the murder of Sisera:

> He fell, he lay down; where he fell, there he lay down

On such wise does this brutal poetess mouth the relished words. But the Psalms indulge parallelism for its own sake, and, in the instance of the One Hundred and Fourteenth, it involves nothing else:

> When Israel went out of Egypt (the house of Jacob from a people of strange language); Judah was his sanctuary (and Israel his dominion). The sea saw it and fled (Jordan was driven back). The mountains skipped like rams (and the little hills like lambs). What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest (thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back)? Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams (and ye little hills like lambs)? Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord (at the presence of the God of Jacob); which turned the rock into a standing water (the flint into a fountain of waters).

The science of poetics studies this quality of balance, but with more definite reference to the rhythm of syllables, short and long. Out of such syllabic variation come forms of versification—

anapest and dactyl, spondee and trochee. But these provide more of an academic autopsy for poetry than cultured enthusiasm over its living body. One learns them as something apart from the poetry he enjoys; one remembers the poem, but forgets its metrical feet. When the esthetic aim is massive appreciation instead of slender analysis, the technical nature of meter can be set aside for the sake of making room for the major appreciation of rhythmic balance as felt in life and reverberated in verse.

THE METER OF MACHINERY

The sense of "poetry in every-day life" is felt in ways that are more living than literary. The general rhythm of physical science and its application to machinery have already been noted. But we may proceed to observe that the private existence of the individual, as he lives it and breathes it, sets him in tune with something like the Infinite; with the natural order of things, as also with this same order done over in mechanical miniature as felt in industry. Examples of the harmonious in our chaotic, almost seismic, existence are innumerable. Were it not for them, we should go mad in even greater proportion than at the present rate of insanity.

One's motor car, if well supplied with cylinders, soothes the nerves of one who is speed-mad on the highway or intent on annihilating so much space per day. Its music, like that of a monstrous metal hummingbird, hath charms to soothe savage or civilized breast. The auto-maker aims not to produce by the car a radio outfit, but the rhythmic movement of the engine is such as to engender a tonal balance, however monotonous. Travel by rail has long done this by means of the tactata played by the wheels upon the rails. Then, as if to work like an eolian harp, the whole train, by piling up and breaking down large masses of air ahead, yields an organ-like effect.

The traveler may enjoy this primitive music or practical poetry in its raw form, or he may call upon the train, as it moves rail after rail, to accompany his recital of a poem. Thus, as his vehicle speeds on, he may make wheel and rail scan such lines as,

> I hold it truth with him who sings
> To one clear harp of divers tones.

Or, if the car be a sleeper with its inducements to insomnia, one may perhaps lure sleep to the eyes and slumber to the eyelids by such soporific effects as may come from having passenger and Pullman join in humming,

> Once upon a midnight dreary,
> While I pondered, weak and weary.

Indeed, some enthusiasts over present-day poetry, as invited by mechanical clatter, have gone so far as to suggest that there are poetic possibilities in the periodic clanks of a flat wheel on a trolley car. But these are only trivial examples of that rhythmic sense which, whether in our natural or civilized states of mind, cannot be subdued. Had we not acquired this from nature and adhered to it in civilization, the poet who lives upon our rhythmic sense would be even worse off than he is to-day.

HOW POETRY IS SEEN

But the appeal to the ear, sustained by a certain sense of rhythm, which the psychologist might call "kinesthesia," is not the only sensuous root beneath the gay plant of poetry. The eye, too, claims its share of responsibility, of rejoicing. The poem as such is not sensed, since eye hath not seen nor ear heard what hath entered into the heart of man poetic. But the visual and auditory are fully operative, if only by direct image and indirect suggestion. Emotion will brood in the poetic nest, and meaning take wings unto itself and fly away; but the nest itself is built of sensations.

The eye in poetry shows itself in the trope, as the ear in tone. This means imagery—metaphor, allegory, metonomy and the like, which terms fain would blind our eyes to the fact that poetry is something sensuous. It is not wholly to what Keats called the "sensual ear," or fully to the sensual eye; but if such sense-organs were incapable of psychological expansion there would be poetical expression.

Those of us who are not poets by either nature or original transgression are wont to marvel at the poet's figurative language, but we should realize that his method is simple. All that he does is to perfect, as a skilful carpenter, the possible dovetailing of the things of this world and the ideas of the mind, or sentiments of the heart. Philosophy exchanges the things for ideas, science effects an interchange by means of formulas; both end in stiff symbolism. Poetry, however, does not divorce itself from things or attempt to get them as equations. Poetry taps them as sources, skims them as milk, or invades them as bees invade flowers. The result is the sensuo-spiritual trope.

ALLEGORY NOT ANALOGY

In a certain sense, the making of the figure is by means of mere likeness, but analogy is not the same as art. The similitude chosen must be remote, incomplete and rather fringy in effect.

Suppose, for example, a love-lorn swain wishes to express the idea that devotion increases as the responsiveness of the other heart grows less. There is both art and religion in the idea; but, instead of simply stating the fact that the rebuffed lover grows more ardent, he proceeds to say, as did Coventry Patmore:

> He loves with love that cannot tire;
> And if, ah, me! he loves alone,
> Through passionate duty love flames higher,
> As grass grows taller round a stone.

Now, one knows full well how the grass reacts upon such unresponsive material; then, when he is in a similar predicament of heart, he invokes the tall grass to tell his story. Nevertheless, this dainty bit of verse suffers from excess of analogy.

Great poets stumble upon and over such analogies, but the general merit of their verse and the impressiveness of their names lead us to overlook what is really crudeness. When Dante, for example, wishes to pay tribute to the spiritual beauty of the woman who inspired his politico-theological poem, he likens her arrival in paradise to the appearance of a new star in a heaven, wherein the old orbs, entranced by her beauty, leave their celestial stations and crowd about her. This, of course, is not bad in spite of the astronomical exaggeration. But, not content with this, Dante likens the celestial zest of the stars to nothing else than the hunger of fish which swarm to a likely spot when some one with food appears. This mixing up of stars and fish, or blending of celestial and piscatorial, is too crudely analogous.

The poet is right in sensing the fact that feminine beauty is so tremendous as to cause swarming and crowding, but wrong in the way he works out his poetic commotion. Homer did vastly better when he described the beauty of Helen by relating how the old warriors, seeing her for whom they had been fighting for nearly a decade, came to the hearty conclusion that their wounds were worth while. Something like this, too, may have happened, but it is impossible to believe that inanimate stars and insensible fish could express any esthetic enthusiasm over any woman's worth.

SHAKESPEARE'S EXAGGERATIONS

Shakespeare reveled in the poetical possibilities of the trope and often wrenched natural objects from their roots to make them serve his purpose. More often did he use the manifold of beautiful nature with reason and delicacy. But once he has caught the fire of the figure, he will let it consume him. The red-handed but white-livered Macbeth recoils from the death of Duncan inflicted by his own bloody hand. Lady Macbeth, with practical womanhood, suggests that a little water will cleanse their wicked hands. But the murderer feels otherwise and is led to indulge in moral exaggeration:

> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green ones red.

Shakespeareans glory in this bold, bloody imagery, but it suffers from too strict analogy and too vast an application.

From the artistic array of matchless tropes in those plays, we may pluck out another exception in which the idea of blood leads the bard to analogies too good to be true ones. Mark Antony wishes the populace to appreciate the pathos of Cæsar's death, and uses his spell-binding art to express and emphasize the effect of the assassins' daggers upon both the emperor's robe and flesh. But the sight of the slashed garment is not sufficiently appealing, hence the dramatic orator reveals the wounds in the victim's body and seems to wish that these "poor, poor dumb mouths" might have some of his own eloquence. Not content with the wound-mouth analogy, he proceeds to liken a wound to a door to which the blood rushes to see if it can be Brutus who has knocked with such unkindness. It's thrilling, it's bloody; and, since we are dealing with crude images, we'll say you can get a "kick" out of such poetry. But wounds are wounds, not mouths or doors. And it is only as a bard is bold to the point of brutality that he will attempt to press the analogy between real objects of one sort and remotely resembling ones of another.

Poets will say such things; they have done so ever since the ancient days when the *Ramayana* was written on parchment or papyrus to the modern ones of *The Dynasts*, when poems are made on typewriters. And so do we, for the image is bound to intrigue us by its vividness and brevity, its pictorial, catchy character.

In business and rural life, in market and campus, along the various walks of life, to say nothing of the suburbs, human minds feel the power of common things to flash forth some color of spiritual meaning, out of which the trope proceeds in triumph. We feel, as well, the rhythmic flow of language, whose sweet sequences are the song of which the massive rhythm of our life is but the full orchestral accompaniment. Love letters abound in tropes and tones, which sometimes find their way into business correspondence. Slang, or poor man's poetry, may be the most vivid, ringing form of poetry in common life, but the letter of all language lives only as it feels the spirit of the poetical.

XIV. Poetry and Culture

XIV

POETRY AND CULTURE

AREN'T WE ALL POETS?

BUT poetry is not merely a volitional and sensational thing, or that which is made and sensed. It is emotional and intellectual, also. We grasp it with sentiment and use culture as a net for its butterflies.

Yet, just as with the natural and sensational form of the poem, so with the rational and sentimental; we must ourselves enjoy the bright poetic feeling or the bard will write for blind eyes and the troubadour sing to deaf ears. We have the natural power to make and enjoy poetical impressions: just as fully do we rejoice in the faculty of entertaining and expressing these in the more refined form of finished poetry. There the common feeling of pleasure-pain is beautified by emotion and clarified by reflection.

We who read what the poet chants, or has to say, are ourselves poets, altho bards of the second order. Our every-day minds have in them, tho buried in their "dark, unfathomed caves," a kind of "gem of purest ray serene." Our buried gems of thought may be only semiprecious stones, but they are there as part of our intellectual estate. They are mined from our feelings.

We do not need to cite psychoanalysis to say that we are creatures of emotion. We receive our simple impressions, like those of colors and sounds; we have our general impressions of space and time; and we think our usual thoughts in the grooves of reason and common sense. But the human mind that receives impressions and responds to them acts more like the Stock Exchange than the Clearing House.

For we are in a condition of general confusion. Our emotions cause that, and make us believe that we cannot live and work without a certain degree of hysteria. Unusual conditions, like a bear movement in the market or a fire in the neighborhood, a ninth-inning rally or even a thunderstorm, have the power to smash the even tenor of our way and produce an emotional clattering. This static in our feelings is a commonplace, only we do not grow accustomed to it.

Out of this inherent emotionalism will the poet-writer and poet-reader engender verse. Both stand in need of the affectional quality of the mind.

There are, of course, the common feelings of pleasure and pain, as experienced by tasting something sweet or bitter, by touching something smooth or rough. But poetry requires "feeling plus," in order to produce its esthetic emotionalism. Now, we are just as well equipped with major feelings as with minor ones; we have our massive moods in and behind our fluctuating feelings. And it is the major, massive mood which we must summon, as from the vasty deep, to become poets of the second order: to read as the poet writes.

OUR MASSIVE MOODS

For the time, in order to realize the depth of the poetic mood, we can ignore the fluttering feelings of the day and settle down into the mind's nocturnal nest. There we can brood about the meaning of things generally, and what life is all about, after all. This does not mean melancholy, still less personal pessimism; it means just what we have said—to entertain the massive moods after the departure of the trifling ones that merely intrigued or aggravated; that gave their thrills or got on our nerves. This we can do, as we know full well, by making room for the larger concerns of existence.

Such major considerations can be based on the general forms of perception rather than on snapshots and close-ups of things in particular. We can meditate upon space and time instead of thinking about the things that exist in the one and the events that take place in the other. Then the flash of a light or the rush of a car will be swallowed up in the gigantic orders where they occur.

This does not mean abstractionism, nor need we be Einsteins and Eddingtons in our private, amateurish contemplation of the space-time order. We need only be impressed by the size of things generally. Now, the poetic extent of the things of this world is made palpable and colored by such monstrous displays as one beholds in sea and sky. Mountain and meadow, too, while comparatively diminutive, can serve us in our impromptu search for sizability.

A FEELING FOR THE VAST

Of course, the reader-poet must not wax sentimental and react verbally by remarking that "nature is wonderful." No, the poet couchant, as he prepares to read the made poem of the poet rampant, is expected to feel no more than the extent and variety of things: feel fully and say nothing. All of us do this at times, furtively and with embarrassment; but when we realize that our glance at starred space and swelling sea, at impressive peak and lawn-like meadow, is the basis of poetic appreciation, we may be willing to lay the foundations of feeling.

Civilization may have marred this vision so that it is obtainable only in the vacation period or when the commuter arrives at his suburban home. Modern sea-travel may have snatched the poetry from the seas when it installed floating, steaming hotels in place of wind-tossed barques. But it is more the idea of stars and waves, of summits and fields than the actual perception of them that should supply the mind with poetic emotions.

Life, too, as lived in a full rather than a fractional way, is productive of the poetic feeling which serves the verse-maker as color aids the painter. Perhaps we may venture to suggest that poetry requires a life-feeling or emotion of existence. These expressions sound somewhat flat in English, but they would be impressive in an exaggerated language like German.

Without worrying about words, however, we may observe that life involves consummate experiences and full feelings just as thoroughly as it calls upon us to have petty pains and pleasures. There is gold laid away in the treasury whose actual currency consists of small change. These grand and golden feelings are entertained both actually and ideally in such experiences as love and death, with their glow, their hush. These we appreciate vaguely, since we cannot understand our loving any better than we can contemplate our dying. These, likewise, have none of the point and pith of the ups and downs of special, daily feelings. But there they are, obtaining in their calm and general way to make us all love love and dread death.

The list of poetic object-feelings cannot be long, because each one includes so much of the natural and human order; but to the vast sentiments of love and death we may add that of war. In the course of time, man may feel poetry in commerce, but up to the hour that is now striking it is the bloody fruits of militarism instead of the products of industrialism that have engaged poetic emotion. Even now, after the wretched futility of conflict has been revealed, the god of war can find no rival in any possible god of business. Time may so work as to produce some Homer for the captains of industry, but the day seems far off when these plumed heroes of trade shall take their place with Achilles and Agamemnon, Hector and Menelaus.

MAJOR OBJECTS AND MASSIVE EMOTIONS

With this limited but vast array of physical objects and human concerns, the poet-reader may come to the happy realization that he is of the stuff that poetic dreams are made of. His vision of the firmament may be torn and broken by the sky-line of tall buildings; his conception of the deep may amount to little more than what passeth through the paths of the sea to discharge its cargo at the crude wharf in the harbor. So, likewise, may love and death and war be accepted as things that happen in human life.

But there is a largesse in the objects scanned and feelings absorbed, and in that major mood one may make his miserable self over into a genuine human being. If, as Schiller ventured, "man is completely man only when he plays," just as true is it that man grows into his full stature when he poetizes.

Man, however, must not mull over his vaster, finer feelings, which would mean only sentimentality or silliness. Rather must he engender his poetic emotions with the vigor of one working at a heavy task. It is his view of things felt that will count for his power to appreciate their significance, not his immediate reaction to them or how they make him feel.

At this juncture it will be helpful and fitting to review the momentous words of certain ones who have sought to reveal the secret of that poetic standpoint which we are struggling to assume. Wordsworth's ideal poet is one who "surveys the spectacle of life with appropriate emotions." Matthew Arnold glorified Sophocles because of his power to "see life steadily and see it whole." But these ideals do little more than couch in splendid language the present notion that we relate the major objects of nature to our more massive moods.

We have other such vast emotions at our disposal and do not hesitate to make free use of them. There is the feeling of love, which lets emotion clothe some impossible object with all the fairness of a host of women. There is the rampant patriotism that maddens us over a war-issue which we grasp with loose vagueness. There is, also, a ridiculous party pride which makes us eloquent and argumentative about the flimsiest of political platforms, to say nothing of ethical enthusiasm over the virtues which are sadly lacking, we think, in other people.

Why cannot these amorous and chauvinistic ferments, these political and moral storms subside sufficiently to let poetic feeling fan us into a fervor over beauty chanted in full chorus by nature herself and echoed by the human heart?

To enjoy and exercise poetic feeling as a means of esthetic appreciation, we have to do little more than refrain from indulging the every-day feelings about banal matters. Once we have removed the weirs of personal interest, the full waters of life will flow freely. Then we shall recognize nature as more of a spiritual whole than a mass of material blocks. Humanity will hover over the heads of individual men as a cloud, so that all sense of thee and me will yield to some open vision of mankind. Then shall one sense the joyousness of the skies and feel as his own the ancient anguish of the earth.

SENSIBILITY AND SENSE

There is sense in what we feel when we entertain universal emotions, hence the poetic feeling that might appear to end in a meaningless glow can culminate in light for the mind.

This is true of the special forms of poetic art as well as of the vague genius of the poetic principle as something merely felt. We need know nothing about the different mode of discourse in epic and lyric to sense the difference between the *Iliad* and the *Lorelei*. The very difference in the size of such poems is sufficient to inform us that they sprang from vastly varied moods. If the massive feeling mates with the major object, or we feel deeply about great things, we shall see, as the poet Schiller saw, that forms of poetry are largely kinds of moods. The idyl reflects one's joy in nature serenely intuited. The elegy voices one's lament over the loss of such native joy, while the satire takes up a bitter pen to record the harsh contrast between nature as we might feel her life and the natural order as we experience it. Thus do the feelings serve the purpose of poetry.

At last the intellect appears; not as a dayspring unheralded by dawn or unaccompanied by clouds, but with the genial glow of sense and feeling. Then we are privileged to see what the poet has to say, and the ideas that have been masked by sense and suffused with feeling take shape and make the poem articulate.

But from the appearance of the mental element in poetry we must not presume that the bard aspires to be didactic, or that his rhythm follows the smooth course of rationality; for rime and reason do not go hand in hand. The poem which is to display sensations and disclose feelings, and which must follow its own technique, cannot move along the strict lines of thought, which ever edges toward the abstractions of deductive and inductive thinking. There are ideas in poems as there are bones in a well-nourished body, but the intellectual structure of the poem grows up with it, as the skeleton in the body.

The cardinal difference between poetry and nonpoetic literature appears in the fact that the poet subordinates ideas to style, while the other writer makes style serve the interests of the intellect. This, in the case of verse, is the more important element in what is often referred to lightly as poetic license. There is no such thing as philosophical or scientific "license," for these methods of thinking are pledged to the idea or the fact.

A philosopher may write with some beauty, as in the case of Plato and Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer and Henri Bergson, but the touch of the stylist is only occasional and superficial. A poet may write profoundly, as in the instance of a Goethe or a Browning, but the native hue of his living verse is only "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." If thought and style, style and thought coincide, it is only as coincidence; since the respective aims of singer and savant are so different in form as to touch only here and there at tangents.

SCIENCE AND STYLE

Both poetry and science deal with nature and have nature as their mother, but there is little family resemblance between them. Both alike reduce the objects of nature to symbols, but the scientific symbol is only an arbitrary sign, while the poetic one is a vivid emblem. You can find nature in scientific formulas, but you cannot sense it; in poetry you both find and feel it. Hence the scientific notion of matter is vastly different from the poetical idea of nature.

Just as diverse are the two conceptions of sea and sky. No poet could proceed according to modern astronomy, since the Copernican system requires the eye to revise its original, permanent vision of the heavens. Shakespeare, in *The Tempest*, was able to express the significance of the sea without indulging in modern geography. So, likewise, in a special science like ornithology; Shelley and Keats can speak authentically of what they have seen and heard in the sky without any analysis of the bird in science.

The intellectual view of nature, as enjoyed by science, is characterized by clearness, but clarity has as little place in poetry as accuracy in painting. The exaggerated clarity of science is something stereoscopic; it results from artificial lenses adjusted with such precision as to yield an over-perfect view of the solid object. In comparison with such artificial verity, the view enjoyed by most poetic eyes has far less verity, but just as much truthfulness. The difference is one of aim, since the poet seeks an adequate perception of things, while the scientist aspires after an accurate presentation.

When science was in its infancy, it was possible for the poet to present its ideas after the vague manner of his art. Thus did the poetical Lucretius with the physics of his day, as the poetical Parmenides had done with the philosophy. But with the elaboration of science as a system of measurements, all hope of scientific poetry and poetical science passed away.

Let any one consider the conception of nature as science indulges it to-day, and he will realize that poet and physicist speak in different languages. Matter is a theoretical thing of atomic, or subatomic, character. Motion is a process punctuated every so often by mathematical stoppages. Space and time, with their points and instants, are just as impalpable in their relativity to something other than themselves, like mind or matter. The strength of things is an energy conserved forever in a quantitative way, and the general progress of the universe a movement taking place in accordance with the second law of thermodynamics. Out of this dry vision, it is impossible for the poet to secure anything he can weave into his verse, for he is like a pelican in the wilderness, or a bird that cannot build its nest in the desert.

THE POETIC MIND

Altho science engrosses the attention of the modern mind, it cannot wholly persuade us that poetic vision is so antiquated that the poet must be pensioned. Poetry does not fare well in the present conception of things; its owls for all their wisdom suffer from too much daylight. To forget what one has learned and ignore what one does know is not a simple task, but it is the poet's duty. Only as he becomes a little child can he enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

If he apes science, as is the vogue with some poets, his verse will be mechanical, his vision pedantic, his tone harsh. He may perhaps be cheered by the thought that the ultimate notion of nature as a system of waves is just as poetical as it is physical, but it will be a long time before the wave-theory of matter can take poetical form; and meanwhile the scientific theory of the schools may be something utterly different.

The kind of intellectualism that the poet may enjoy was expressed long ago by Aristotle in the form of "poetic mind—*nous poetikos*." Such poetic-mindedness, which Aristotle believed would serve the philosopher as well as the poet, consists in a certain completeness of vision, according to which each separate thing is seen, or intuited, in the light of the whole. This is by no means the same as the whole-part relation so popular in philosophy; it is in polar opposition to the spirit of scientific specialization. Nevertheless, this integrity of vision, made difficult by the very size of the physical world and the manifold of its diverse forms, is what the poet must maintain. At least, he can recognize it, if only in the elegiac form of lament that it is no longer possible. It was something very like this which Schiller referred to in his matchless essay on *Naïve and Sentimental Poetry.*

THE POETIC "ARGUMENT"

The special manner in which a poem may pretend to describe what science would identify, or meditate upon what philosophy would reason out, appears in the strange expression, "The Argument." The reader of poetry observes this at the head of a book-division of a poem whose stanzas are supposed to carry out the idea indicated. But, after all, "argument" is only a conventional name for a pre-digest of the story which will follow, and should not convey the notion that the poem was ever intended to prove anything. There is no argument in a true poem, which aims at something other than scientific accuracy of measurement.

The only suitable thing the modern poet can do with science is to have it correct some of his special mistakes, but not his gorgeously egregious errors in astronomy and biology. A single example of such scientific revision appears, as pointed out by the Spanish essayist, Miguel Unamuno, in the poet's perverse and perennial habit of referring to the night as something "descending" from the skies, as, "Now falls the sable night," or, "Night like raven's wing fell from the sky." Quite the other way, since the sky above is the means whereby the earth, itself a dark planet, is illuminated. Night begins in the valleys and makes its shadowy way upward to achieve its melancholy victory over the flickering peaks. Yet this is only a single, harmless instance of poetic error and one which can be corrected without any loss but rather gain in poetic effect.

EVERLASTING JINGLES

The quasi-mental element in poetry, which cultured people have usually assumed to be the major premise, is sufficient to satisfy the individual whose mental powers and grade of education equip him for better work in poetry than in physics. If the cultured person will read his poem backwards, so to speak, and thus make sensation first and intellect last by way of consideration, he will realize that poems have their legitimate place in life, even in that life which is modern.

This does not mean to know poems by heart or even be so familiar with their themes as to make reference to them in company. One should no more readily cry out,

> I must go down to the seas again,
> To the lonely sea and sky,

just to pay tribute to England's new poet laureate, than he would hum an aria from *Il Trovatore* or *Madame Butterfly*. But he can show that he senses rhythm and music, and may be able to give the impression that he has just come from a concert hall.

Poetry has suffered from both poem-writer and poem-reader, who have overintellectualized the stuff that songs are made of. It is not that the poetical people, either combatants or bystanders, have taken themselves too seriously, but that they have indulged in the wrong kind of seriousness. They should be naïve and lighthearted in their dealings with poetic ideas, but make up for this literary levity by an unwonted seriousness about poetic perception and feeling. There is no special significance in saying,

> Sumer is icumen in,
> Lhude sing cuccu!
> Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
> And springeth the wude nu—
> Sing cuccu!

But something about this jingle has preserved it for nearly seven centuries, which will not be the case with some of our contemporary "facts."

The preservative power of a poem lies in its manner. Once it has caught ear and eye and made appeal to the heart, it cannot pass out of being. The culture which comes from reading poetry should be the same; it should be the enjoyment of word-beauty with little regard for information or instruction. Such things should be sought elsewhere than in verse.

XV. Culture and Happiness

XV

CULTURE AND HAPPINESS

IS CULTURE A CURSE?

NOW that we have seen how we get culture from pictures and poems, it may be well to inquire what effect all this is to have upon our minds. One works to acquire wealth without as often considering just what he is going to do with his money when he gets it. Then there are many who have acquired a wealth of knowledge but who have not enjoyed it in the way that is necessary when knowledge is changed into culture. Indeed, we have before us to-day in America a host of people who have money or knowledge but who are not wealthy or cultured in the strict sense of those terms.

That which has guided those who have acquired this world's goods or this world's knowledge is the idea of possession. In connection with culture, this means books on one's own shelves or pictures on his walls. With a nation, it may mean the possession of libraries and art galleries. But culture itself is something different from, altho not wholly independent of, these physical things. Culture is an abiding and satisfactory state of mind, private or public. Intellectual enlightenment and esthetic enjoyment are the gold and silver in the treasury.

But does culture make for happiness?

Most people are inclined to take an affirmative answer for granted. The cultured man is happy, if only in his own way. He may be too complacent in his culture, but his intellectualism and estheticism, while they may not make him supremely happy, cannot bring him misery. Herein, however, arises an authentic question, the discussion of which should fortify the cause of culture and clarify the nature of human happiness. The happy effect of culture becomes a vital question, because, if for no other reason, the wiser minds of the race in pondering upon the problem of happiness have decided some for and some against the cultured life as a means to that joyful end.

"Where there is no vision the people perish," said the writer of the Book of Proverbs.

"He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow," said the writer of Ecclesiastes.

In secular, philosophic literature the same contrast of opinions is to be noted. Among the most profound students of the relation between human enlightenment and human enjoyment we find Aristotle and Bacon thinking optimistically and saying "yea" to culture; but just as definitely do we discover Voltaire and Goethe thinking pessimistically and voting "nay." One might perhaps assume that the earlier thinkers were rejoicing in the fruits of knowledge gleaned from the harvests of the ancient Enlightenment and the modern Renaissance, while the later ones came upon such knowledge in the eighteenth century, where they found it somewhat stale. But it is better to consider their contentions *pro* and *con*, for and against culture as a means to happiness. Then we can contrast the flavor of Eve's apple with that of Venus.

IGNORANCE, CULTURE AND BLISS

Aristotle appeared to think that nothing but good could come of the intellect, and that, in contrast with the life of actión, intellectual contemplation was bound to be the better one. His method of argument was one of elimination, in the course of which he discovered that the intellect lay at the bottom of the soul as the one thing permanent, the one thing valuable.

"Now, if from a living being you take away action, what remains but contemplation? So, then, the energy of the gods, who are eminent in blessedness, will be one apt for contemplative speculation; and of all human energies, that will have the greatest capacity for happiness which is nearest akin to this."

In contending thus for culture, or the life of contemplative speculation, as he calls it, Aristotle proceeded in a manner almost physical, as tho the intellect were the fixed thing in the mind. Then, of course, it would be both wisdom and happiness to cultivate it.

But this ancient master of eudæmonism added to the idea of permanence on the part of the intellect the sense of its own preciousness, so that they who cultivated the mind might rest assured of both its stability and value. The worth of the intellect he expressed by saying, "In proportion as people have the art of contemplation, so far have they also the art of being happy, not incidentally, but in the way of contemplative speculation, because it is in itself precious." The American tendency to regard the intellect as a means to an end, as industry, stands out in sharp but not altogether pleasing contrast to the Athenian ideal of intellect as the supreme source of satisfaction, or that which required nothing but itself to make men happy.

THE SUAVE LIFE

A similar estimate of the happiness that comes from culture is to be found in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*. Here the reader finds the activity of intellect referred to as "the work of contemplation," while its effects are found to minister to the happiest life, *suavissima vita*. Bacon, who introduced the term "Culture," proceeds in a more historical manner than Aristotle, as if to show that the experience of the race was a justification for culture as the best means of enjoyment. This is done by appeal to sacred and secular literature, in which, according to Bacon, men of contemplative life are represented as better and happier than men of active conquest.

In the beginning, the seventh day, on which God rested and contemplated his work, was blessed above the days of fruitful toil. So, likewise, the offering of Abel, who led the shepherd's contemplative life, was more agreeable than that of Cain, who was a tiller of the soil. In like manner, such a man of action as Moses was famous for his Egyptian learning, Job for his natural philosophy, and Solomon for his wisdom.

If Bacon had been more of a feminist, he would have cited the case of the spiritual Rachel, who was loved more than the practical Leah; or, still more obvious, the case of Mary, who chose the better part and found the one thing needful when she sat at the Saviour's feet and heard his word, while Martha was cumbered about much serving.

When Bacon turned to secular history, he observed that mythology shows how superior were the inventors of new arts and sciences to rulers and lawgivers, for the former were regarded as the gods, the latter as demigods only. Thus, like Aristotle, Bacon finds the most blessed condition of life to be one fitted for such contemplative speculation as was enjoyed by the gods on high Olympus. So, likewise, with the heroes of antiquity: the wise Socrates was superior to the practical Xenophon. Aristotle really towered above Alexander, and the rhetoric of Cicero made him preferable to Cæsar with all his mighty works. According to such culture-reasoning, we ourselves should have to choose Goethe instead of Napoleon, exalt Emerson above Edison, and place President Eliot rather than President Roosevelt in the Hall of Fame.

EXCELLENCE AND ENJOYMENT

When, however, the effects of culture are considered in the light of human enjoyment rather than in the form of human excellence, the pessimism of modern thought inclines toward the ancient idea that the increase of knowledge is the increase of sorrow. As far as cultured excellence is concerned, we realize that the word is often as mighty as the deed. Cæsar is esteemed as much for his *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars* as for his actual campaigns. Napoleon wrote his name upon the history of what he both said and did. Lincoln is now famous for the style of his letters and addresses. Roosevelt is acquiring a kind of literary fame comparable to his record as statesman, with his war on trusts and the digging of the Panama Canal. Coolidge is beginning to be thought of as the author of an autobiography and a newspaper column. Thus is wisdom justified of her children; thus does culture come into its final triumph.

But the argument in favor of the immediate effect of culture as a means of pleasure is not so swift or sure. In connection with the problem of culture and happiness, it is most natural to think of Rousseau, whose essay on the evil influence of the arts and sciences is looked upon usually as the first challenge to culture. But, in a general way, man has always been suspicious of his intellect as a means of happiness. The story of Eve and the fatal effects of eating fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, the myth of Prometheus and the crime of discovering the secret of heaven, and the tragedy of Œdipus, who solved the riddle of the Sphinx, are age-old manifestations of this intellectual fear. In our day, there are serious minds who feel that, with Relativity or even Radio, we are going too far in our acquaintance with time and space.

DREAM AND DELUSION

But, not only is there this general distrust of the intellect, with its question-raising, problem-solving tendencies; there is also the fear that the intellect, with its wide range, will so outdistance the will as to leave man a helpless dreamer. Indeed, the issue raised in the question of culture and happiness is of a contrasted, competitive character. It is felt that man must act, be a doer of the word, and keep practise apace with theory. This painful contrast between the man of ideas and the man of action appears most classically in the story of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, only to be repeated grotesquely to-day in the radio-dialogs of Amos and Andy. If the practical treatment of the things of this world is lost to view, man will become the victim of his ideas, of his culture.

In the competitive claims of intellect and will, of theoretical culture and practical conquest, the apprehension is that we shall think too much for our own good, when, perhaps, with the expansion of our industries, we may do too much and build better, or farther, than we know.

Does our national peril lie in any heaven-scanning poetry or in our lofty skyscrapers? In any too-profound philosophy or in our deep tubes and tunnels? Our age is intellectual primarily in general sophistication on the part of the public, who are not likely to learn too much, and in our sciences, which for the most part produce results that are swallowed up by practical application in our industries. Hence, one cannot truly be alarmed by any current tendency to read and think, to cultivate taste in things beautiful or to ponder over questions of the true.

CULTIVATING THE GARDEN

However, it is only fair to consider the objections raised when culture is compared with conquest and the intellect alined against the will. The most classic expression of this preference for the practical will is expressed in brief, epigrammatic form at the conclusion of Voltaire's slender work, *Candide*. In his search for the secret of happiness, the youth is led to see that happiness can come only when one indulges in thoughtless work, and while words and ideas are all very well for us in their way, "the one thing needful is to cultivate our garden—*il faut cultiver notre jardin*."

This bit of worldly wisdom, it should be observed, was uttered long before Voltaire by Montaigne, who, believing that man was born for the sake of acting, expressed the wish that death might come upon him calmly at work in his garden planting his cabbages.

This revolt against culture, as it might be called, received its most comprehensive consideration by Goethe in *Faust.* The moral of this personal, philosophical poem seems to be that no matter how much one may attempt to gain from his senses and intellect, the really happy moment which one would perpetuate throughout his life comes only when one is engaged in some form of immediate activity directed toward a useful end, which in Faust's case consisted in draining a swamp to make a village habitable.

From Montaigne to Goethe, the idea which militates against culture is that it takes man away from the immediacies of his every-day life, whence he is rendered unhappy. The French sage reasoned on the ground that "we were born in order to act—*nous sommes nayr pour agir.*" The German thinker added to this fundamental idea the further one that man is fitted by nature for immediate activity in a limited field, not for remote strivings after the unlimited. This is expressed in his words, "It is within limitations that one shows himself a master—*In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister.*"

BLOWING BUBBLES

Those who are disposed to doubt the efficacy of culture may find further arguments in the novels of Flaubert and Turgeniev, who seem to dread the development of intellect lest it render man as useless as Don Quixote, as inefficient as Hamlet. Indeed, one can find numerous objections to the kind and degree of culture which are supposed to come from higher education if he will consider what captains of industry and self-made men have to say in criticism of college education.

Within academic circles, too, the suspicion of the intellect is revealing itself in the departure from the classic course for something more commercial, or from the cultural to the vocational. Particular motives of a practical sort may have inaugurated these changes in the college curriculum, but there is, likewise, the old fear that the pure intellect may lead man astray and beget the sorrow that comes from the increase of knowledge.

When, by way of résumé, we contrast these contentions, we observe that, with Aristotle and Bacon, the intellect is regarded as the highest and best in man, so that the cultivation of it will afford the best and truest happiness. This conclusion was due to the estimate of man, who was regarded as Man Thinking, or *homo sapiens*. The modern conception of man, before and after the entrance of Evolution, has been of a different nature. Man is looked upon as Man Doing, or *homo faber*. "We were born to act," said the skeptical Montaigne. Man is a master of himself only when he devotes his practical energies to some limited field, asserted Goethe.

HUMANITY AND HAPPINESS

But such anticultural reasoning is based wholly upon man as a creature of nature, not as a rational being living in his own right. Yet even nature, in the production of the larger brain with its myriad cells, in the gift of language as well as in the powers of social communication which she has afforded man, seems to have been intent upon producing an intellectual creature with the ability to know both himself and her. Hence, as long as man has the physical capacity for culture, it is safe to assume that the lines of intellect may be thrown out safely as far as man is able to cast them.

There is in man himself, as a separate species, the ceaseless tendency to strive beyond nature in order to live a strictly human life. This appears in both civilization and culture, or the perfection of both outer existence and inner life. If civilization becomes artificial, as it did in Babylon, Rome, and the France of the Louis, history may conclude that man has gone too far. Likewise, when culture becomes overrefined and turns decadent, the same fear of antinaturalness may be entertained. But, at the present time, the human excess appears on the side of effete civilization rather than in connection with a culture too polite.

Let us now consider the respective claims of intellect and will as means to happiness. First of all, it must be assumed that both thinking and acting are necessary in the life of mankind, that some measure of consciousness and motion is necessary in the life of an animal. Then, the only question is one of emphasis. Shall education and the larger wisdom of life commend intellectual culture or volitional conquest as the better means of attaining to the joy of life?

THE INTOXICATION OF IDEAS

A critical view of the human intellect as a means to happiness is bound to bring out the fact that the excessive cultivation of the mind tends to draw man away from the stubborn facts of life. This results in illusion. The intellectual lives in a world of his own ideas, where he enjoys, for a time, the delightful visions his intellect has fabricated. His is a joy, but it is the joy of intellectual intoxication. The delights of the dreamer might be permitted were it not for the fact that we live in an actual world where facts must be recognized and deeds done, if man is to live.

No doubt there is in the life of culture the tendency to indulge in dreams, dilate upon ideals, and thus escape the crass actualities of the given world of things and persons. Then, too, there is in a certain type of education the tendency to instil ideals which stand out in pathetic contrast to the drab conditions of life as lived. The student is taught to consider general situations, indulges in abstractions, and is thus drawn away from the painful particularities of actual existence. So, likewise, when polite culture presents life in the form of beautiful art, pleasant music and romantic literature, the intellect is gratified, but common sense can find no nourishment.

When, at length, the dreamer awakens, there is the misery of realizing that he has been dwelling in a world of his own, apart from and in contrast with the concrete order of space and time. When one persists in such overintellection, he tends to become a decadent, who is ill fitted for the common affairs of actual life. Such decadence then produces little communities of impractical and sometimes ill-balanced minds, who inhabit a Latin Quarter or a Greenwich Village and dawdle about while they dilate upon intellectual and esthetic ideals and the remoteness of the world from them.

But to diagnose the disease is, likewise, to prescribe the cure. If there has been too much intellect, there must be more; only now the intellect is supposed to exercise itself in a critical manner and set the falsely cultured person aright with respect to both himself and the world he lives in. Only the intellect can do this; only the physician can heal himself. And is it not significant that the critics of culture have been, for the most part, men of authentic learning like Goethe and Voltaire, Rousseau and Montaigne, Flaubert and Turgeniev, whose strictures upon the cultured life have already been noted?

SATISFACTION OR STUPEFACTION?

On the other hand, when the life of practical activity is recommended as the happy one, it must not be thought that there are no dangers in deeds. Indeed, one of the most significant and serious elements in the active life as a means to happiness is found in the fact that it leads to the conclusion of pessimism. Those who advance the idea of enjoyment through energy seem to say, "We should be happy in our culture; but since we cannot, we turn to activity as an anodyne." This was the spirit of Montaigne when he expressed the desire to have death find him in his garden of cabbages, because life had not made answer to his great question, "What do I know?" This, too, was the cynical spirit of Voltaire, who recommended the practical cultivation of the garden by saying, "Let us work without thinking; it is the only way to render life endurable." And this, likewise, the tone of Goethe, who in his deep worldliness turned to the life of action, because it seemed the intellect could never keep the promises of happiness it held out to man, creature of earth.

There is, of course, a definite joy in work as the expression of power and skill, as the realization of plan and purpose. But the kind of joy from work advised by the anticulturist is of the private and paralyzing sort which stupefies the soul it cannot satisfy. One may fill his mind with dreams and awaken in pain to the stark reality of life, or one may dull his mind with drudgery and in such a dulled condition feel no sorrow, since he has no feeling at all. It was in this sense that Gorky said, in *Foma Gordyeeff*, "Business is not business, but a sort of plug. We plug up the emptiness of our souls with it."

IS BUSINESS A PLUG?

If one visualizes the population of a modern nation, as our own, he can hardly persuade himself that human beings are suffering from over-intellection and a surplus of culture so much as from restless activity and the weariness of the practical life we affect to praise so highly. Naturally, there is work to be done, even when we might endure with half the number of automobiles and only a fraction of the clothing produced by changing styles; but it is not so easy to make a virtue out of a necessity and thus praise labor as a means of happiness when it is rather the actual condition of existence in nature and society.

There is no need to emphasize the importance of national industry in America, but it might be well to lay some stress upon national intellection. In our condition of half-culture, we are inclined to believe in national salvation by public works rather than by faith in the intellect and its power to see life aright. "My idea," says Gorky in the work just cited, "is that everybody ought without fail to know solidly what he is living for." Now, there are few who have such solid knowledge of life's apparent purpose, some who rejoice in a superficial conception of human life, and the majority who work without thinking as the only way to render life endurable.

Why not, then, heed the voice of Athenian wisdom and exercise Aristotle's fine faith in the human intellect to satisfy the needs of the human heart?

If there are dangers in intellection and pitfalls in culture, we can afford to brave them according to the ancient motto, "Dare to be wise—*Sapere aude*." It is just such wise audacity that is needed at the present time, when the energy of the soul goes forth into immediate activity of a utilitarian sort, and when knowledge is chiefly sophistication and esthetic enjoyment little more than a series of thrills.

We have an intellect and senses as well as a will and nerves; the culture of the intellectual and sensuous is more likely to produce lasting happiness than is anything that can come from the overactive life of America.

XVI. Culture and Personality

XVI

CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

CULTURE AND COLORFULNESS

PERSONALITY is a quality of the human soul which defies definition and can even elude the attempt to apprehend it in a clear form. Nevertheless, one is able to detect this delightful characteristic in another, but can say no more than that "there is something about him," or he is "magnetic," or his is a "colorful personality."

These vague but almost satisfying descriptions seem to indicate a certain fluorescence which certain chosen individuals emit as tho from the superabundance of spiritual life within them. A person of personality, like "a man of parts," may be a poet or a politician, the exceptional individual one may meet in society or when on a vacation. He has that mysterious "something" about him, is magnetic in inspiring enthusiasm, and reflects the rich color of his inner life.

With this as a general identification of the exceptional individual, we may proceed to a more definite conception of him by saying that the "something about him" is really something extra, the unusual and unexpected. His is a personality plus. He has raised his individuality to the second power. His ego, unlike that of Peer Gynt, does not suffer from the fatal "enough," but is superabundant. The definition of the man of personality is then quantitative, not qualitative. The "personality" possesses no attributes of intellect or will which others do not enjoy, but has common attributes in excess. Or the person of genuine individuality is varied and versatile; all of his nature functions; his mind is flexible and his soul sensitive, so that he has a certain touch, or tact.

It may be that much of this human quality which goes to make up personality is a gift of nature like beauty, but it is just as likely that personality can be cultivated in ways that beauty cannot. Now, culture is a superior means to that supreme end, since culture tends to add that "something" which one should have about him, just as it lends color to life and generates magnetism. Doubtless there are several forms of personality, when that term is treated in a strictly philosophic sense; intellectual, ethical and religious personality. Yet the most authentic form of personality is the esthetic one, so that the nearest approach to the pole of personality is made by means of esthetic culture. This will teach one something about the arts, but all the more surely will it instruct the individual in the art of graceful living.

PERSONALITY AND PLEASURE

When this art of living gracefully is considered in a psychological manner, it will be found to exhibit no occult qualities of the soul, but, primarily, only the sense of pleasure in an enhanced degree and refined form. The person of personality is one who feels the joy of life as such; the Superman is one who enjoys himself. These individuals with the exaggerated ego, like Emerson and Nietzsche, Wagner and William Blake, may assert themselves along lines of independent morality, whence they become revolutionary and somewhat disagreeable. But the essence of such egoism is invariably esthetical and makes its original appearance in an emotional form, which is that of esthetic joy.

The principle of personality through pleasure as a form of self-culture is fairly well known in the large and liberal history of the race. In speculative Sanskrit literature, as found in the *Upanishads*, one reads a glowing sentence like the following: "He who desires the world of perfumes and of garlands, by his mere will, perfumes and garlands come to him; and, having obtained the world of perfumes and garlands, he is happy." Not only that sentence, but parallel ones, as, "He who desires the world of women and of song, by his mere will the world of women and song comes to him."

This might seem to be merely an outburst of fervid rhetoric, but it appears in close connection with the famous doctrine of selfhood enunciated in the *Upanishads* and is an exemplification of the joyful effects which follow after one has discovered the self and found freedom in all the worlds.

THE EGOISM OF ENJOYMENT

The development of individualism in the western world had to wait for the coming of the nineteenth century before the ideals of esthetic personality received definite form and due stress. In Medievalism it was the self as soul, in early Modernism the self as mind. But the development of Romanticism, followed by the elaboration of Decadence and Symbolism, rendered the human self so concrete in feeling that its character could be outlined in definite form.

The peculiarities of this personal movement in the history of culture may be summed up as the effort to enjoy life and the direct consciousness of happiness. Later on, Ibsen, in *Little Eyolf*, chanced upon an expression significant of the individualistic movement when he made Alfred Almers say of his little son, "I plan to create a conscious happiness within him."

Happiness is, then, something which culture creates, something of which culture makes us conscious. From such a created consciousness comes personality, or esthetic personality.

In the Romantic School, Friedrich Schlegel expressed this by placing his Lucinde in a world of her own esthetic creation, wherein she was to experience the "enjoyment of a beautiful present." Furthermore, it was the aspiration of the romantic individual to seek the personality of pleasure in a "restless striving after the new, the piquant and frappant." The direct bearing of pleasure upon personality was enunciated at the close of the century by Sudermann, in *Magda*, wherein the heroine attains to selfhood by means of free happiness and a voice like that which George Moore put into the throat of his Evelyn Inness.

Magda's achievement of personality through pleasure, or her eudæmonistic egoism, was expressed sincerely and adequately by the Pastor, who loved her for her spiritual worth but who appreciated her capacity for personal happiness. "As you stood before me yesterday," said he, "in your freshness, your natural strength, your—your greatness, I said to myself, 'That is what you might have been if at the right moment joy had entered into your life.'" That is, of course, a literary expression and just a *bon mot* in dramatic dialog, but it contains a kind of principle to the effect that one becomes one's self when joy enters into one's life, or when one creates by culture a conscious happiness within one. Then personality exudes from one as perfume from a plant; then one beams with his intellectuality and assumes charm as an attractive garment.

"SOMETHING ABOUT HIM"

So, if we are disposed to break into the history of the individualistic movement, we might suggest a sort of Esthetic Imperative, which could be worded as follows: "So live, at least in public, as to give the impression that you have just been reading Shakespeare or looking at Raphael's Madonnas or listening to Beethoven or examining Greek vases."

This amounts to saying that the individual who desires to enjoy and express personality must forsake the commonplace, flee from the banal, and create an atmosphere of the finest as he has himself inhaled this from the means of culture at his disposal. He need not recite Shakespeare or try to hum the music of the second movement of the *Fifth Symphony* or sigh over the Madonnas or dilate upon the vases. But, somehow, if there is "something about him," he can shed the air of art-gallery and music-hall and smell not of the shop.

Personal pleasure in beauty has the power so to punctuate one's personality as to create the happy suspicion that he rejoices in states-of-soul instead of common sensations and simple images. When one experiences and expresses such states, one can call his soul his own and, like the Decadents and Symbolists, rejoice in but not so often refer to "self" and "soul" the way Samain and Retté, Charles Morice and Gustav Kahn, Verhaeren and Rodenbach spoke of *moi-même* and *mon âme.* Yes, one may so exalt a similar egoism, but without the inconvenient exaggerations of these overwrought personalities, who seemed to speak as men filled with new wine.

The identification of the soul-state which is to constitute one's personality may be made, first, by stating that it results from an interiorizing, not an exteriorizing, activity of the mind. One exteriorizes his mind when his senses go out after sensations and objects; a color or a tone, a tree or a loud sound. The mind needs such stuff in order to guide its master about among the things of this world, but there is nothing unusual or distinctly valuable in the common course of sensations. They are the gift of nature, or are brought about in the struggle for existence, in which the individual organism must come to a sensory understanding with the world.

INWARD COSMETICS

Interiorized soul-states are produced from within by dint of effort, power of attention and strength of intuition. They come into being when one imagines the real object, or, as the artist says, "expresses" it. The object is there in the world existing in its own right as a thing. The sensation is there in the natural reaction of the sense-organ and brain. But the state of soul expresses itself as that which the individual personality produces in order to gratify his esthetic sense. The painter does this when he intuits the actual terrain and makes the landscape a state of the soul, as Amiel said it was. The composer must do this when he seizes upon strange impressions made up of tones and colors to produce a sonata. The poet, too, with his moods and images, which somehow fare forth from within as discourse and story.

Those who are not so gifted and whose power to imagine is somewhat amateurish may still engage in the operation of creating conscious states of mind competent to form an inner world of personality, in which they may live and move and have their being. The act in question is somewhat intellectual in that it involves ideas and images, but it is just as emotional and necessitates the ability to feel deeply about the common things of life, as Linnæus wept at his first sight of English heather. It is in such states of mind that the poet confesses how the meanest flower that blows can give rise to thoughts too deep for tears.

Now, the practical person in pursuit of culture need not grow hyperemotional to realize that his is the power to intuit with warmth the simpler objects of experience to render them states of mind of emotional warmth and esthetic worth.

The state-of-soul now under scrutiny is something engendered. We must will to be happy if we wish to be happy. In like manner, we must will to feel the particular quality of happiness which we are to experience in the perception of beauty, as also in the cultivation of taste. This does not mean anything extraordinary; it is rather the natural condition of the mind, and one to be emphasized in the elaboration of esthetic experience. At this point, it may be well to revert to the ever-wise Aristotle and repeat his significant words about happiness: "Pleasure does not come into being without energy, and every energy perfects pleasure."

ENJOYMENT AS ENERGY

If we may take this sentence as a text, we may observe that energy and enjoyment stand in necessary connection. It is the office of the will in its energy to promote pleasure, just as it is the function of pleasure to perfect the energy thus engendered. This means, if nothing else, that the quality of pleasure which one is to feel in the promotion of esthetic personality is not something that merely happens to him, as tho he were to inherit an estate. No, it is rather the promotion of something one deems worth while. Of course, one must work and make a living, perhaps hold office and discharge his duties with fidelity, since one does not live merely for the purpose of promoting his personality.

The situation in question, somewhat paradoxical as it is, resembles that of the athlete who frequents the gymnasium for the purpose of developing his muscles. The athlete realizes that life does not consist in exercise of this sort, but is a matter of practical activity directed toward some useful end. Nevertheless, he has come to the conclusion that the development of muscular strength and skill, which may or may not be available for his calling in life, is of value in itself. He desires to be more statuesque in appearance. He wishes to excel in play as well as in work, hence he exercises in the artificial manner of the gymnasium. So, likewise, the person who would cultivate the functions of his mind in thought and taste. He realizes that poetry and music may not be of practical value to him, but is satisfied that they will serve the interests of the personality which he has under cultivation.

CULTURE AND THE SUPERMAN

The main objection to the ideal of esthetic personality is found in the difficulty of achieving it. The proper reply to that objection is that the difficulty can and should be overcome. This has been done in the instance of men of genius, and altho one may despair of achieving such personality as theirs, he can come as near to it as to their works, if not nearer. In the case of Shakespeare, it appears as tho some superabundant zest for life were responsible for his vast creative power and the less evident personality which smoldered within his poetry. Goethe affords a far clearer example of an individual who set his real self before him as a port and trimmed every sail to insure his arrival. Altho the private personality of Goethe is not obtrusive, except perhaps in his more personal writings, it is evident that his poetry was more than aught else a means for engendering that superb personality in which he came to rejoice.

With less eminent minds, this same effort to engender, experience and express personality is unmistakable. William Blake, who was none too sound in either body or mind, knew the power of the will in the promotion of esthetic pleasure; hence he said, "Energy is eternal delight." Emerson, who was so famous for his cheerfulness, seems to have promoted this quality of his soul by the exercise of a quiet energy which evinces itself, ever so often, in some of his more radical utterances. In the case of Nietzsche, with his physical and mental afflictions, there is the same energy of enjoyment discernible as in Blake, only in Nietzsche's life it took on a more desperate form.

The musical art of Wagner, especially in *The Ring of the Nibelungs*, is further testimony to the fact that personal pleasure comes not into being without energy, especially when it is the happiness of something more than meat and drink. This need of joy in the perfection of personality appears primarily in the character of Wotan, who is a constant sufferer from sadness and lack of freedom. This sorrowful and fettered condition of life is transmitted to his son, Siegmund, who likewise complains that, while he was meant to be called "Joyful," he should really be named "Woful." The failure of both god and hero to attain to adequate personality is attributed, not to any want of wisdom or character, but to lack of power to feel proper pleasure. When, on the other hand, there is sufficient capacity for the joy of life, as with Siegfried and Brünhilde, there is the swift and easy elaboration of personality.

THE CULTIVATION OF PERSONALITY

Any one who is interested in this doctrine of esthetic personality through superior pleasure can find additional examples in the writings of later Germans, such as Hauptmann and Sudermann. In Sudermann's *Dame Care*, the hero suffers from a typical German sense of sadness, which prevents the promotion of a desired personality; and it is not until, through violence, he finds the joy of life, that Dame Care restores his soul to him. In Hauptmann's *The Sunken Bell*, the hero toiled in both sorrow and weakness until at last he consummated his great work, whereupon he was able to say, "Now, I am both happy and a master." In the minds of such literary philosophers, the enjoyment of life, instead of being something extra and exceptional, is of the very essence of human existence thought of as personal.

The practical conclusion to this in a philosophy of culture is that one who would cultivate personality for private if not social purposes must see to it that his mind is nourished with proper esthetic food. One may be efficient in office and successful in business and yet fail of personality, because he treated his personality as a means rather than an end, with the result of becoming a skilful worker or faithful employee or successful business man. Such things are, of course, desirable and praiseworthy in themselves, but the elaboration of conscious personality by means of esthetic culture is another matter with an excellence all its own. The mysterious "something about" one that lends him the charm of personality may be one of various things. Eminent among them is culture.

Here and there, along the list of our acquaintances, are names that must be starred. We know these special souls that have something about them. Princes they seem in a land without principalities. They may not appear in learned cap and gown or flaunt artistic smock and tam-o'-

shanter; but, like Judah's king, they are anointed with joy and gladness above their fellows. Their garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia, as if they'd come out of ivory palaces. They know their paintings and poems, their operas and symphonies, and are known of them. We may bow before them, as tho they were Jupiter and Mercury, but they are men of like passions with ourselves. Like passions, indeed! save that they have absorbed their culture, which has nourished within them that personality which astounds us. That is that "something" about them.

XVII. Paths and Pitfalls of Culture

XVII

PATHS AND PITFALLS OF CULTURE

THE PRIMROSE PATH

CULTURE is a pathway out of nature into the world of humanity. The process of evolution, which produced man, leads him forward toward the scheme of existence found in the social order akin to that of other creatures. The outer elaboration of this is civilization; the inner enhancement is culture.

These strictly human organizations of life are the work of man's intellect, which branches off from instinct, often runs parallel with it, but attempts to advance beyond it. Civilization keeps man's feet upon the earth, but succeeds in making action there more efficient and life more comfortable. Culture attempts to lead man out of life in order that he may become truly human. Man is only completely man, not when he works and not when he "plays," as Schiller suggested, but when he has culture.

The atmosphere of culture is that of Humanism. In itself, the idea of "Humanity" may mean no more than the present aggregate of human beings upon the planet in terms of billions. But this is only a quantitative humanism, and it is the quality of human life, not the quantity, which both morality and culture emphasize.

Moral humanism produces a certain humaneness, which flowers in sympathy, if not in conscience. It produces the social and altruistic character. Cultured humanism, while no competitor of such ethical endeavor, seeks to produce the superior, aristocratic character. His is the superiority of intellect, the aristocracy of taste.

The method of engendering such human culture is by the refinement of the senses and the development of intellect. It is most natural to turn to the fine arts as the means of culture, since in their outer appearance they tend to engage the senses in an unusual and more perfect manner, just as they in their spirit induce the intellect to operate for the benefit of the entire personality. When the senses are left to themselves, they do little more than provide practical reactions whereby the mind comes to an understanding with the world of nature wherein man must struggle for existence. When the intellect goes its own way, it identifies the forms of nature, as in geometrical science, and aids man in his application of intellect to industry. The conduct of mind is akin to the process of culture, except that mind as such tends to render knowledge cold and impersonal, as appears in scientific laws. Hence it is the genial office of culture to lend natural coloring and human warmth to the ideas which the mind entertains.

THE BETTER AND BIGGER

The first steps along the pathway of culture are to be taken in the direction of Quality. When the cultured person is confronted with the ideals of the Bigger and Better, he knows which to prefer. He realizes that it is not the size but the shape of a tall building which should elicit his attention and command his esteem. He knows that it is not the height of the Statue of Liberty which he should praise, but such comeliness of form and spiritual significance as it may have. He does not emphasize the amount of money paid for an old master, but inquires concerning its historical significance and esthetic worth as a specimen of the Renaissance. He will not care for the loudness of a symphony by Strauss if he can enjoy the way in which the music resolves its dissonance into ultimate harmony. He will not boast about the size of his library, but may be complacent about the special works he has placed upon the shelves of his memory. Quality first and last, for the cultured person, is his ideal; quality with a certain amount of artistic material between the fine extremes.

This emphasis which we would lay on the kind of culture in contrast with the amount of art or the extent of knowledge, is unusually necessary to-day. The present tendency is to stress the minimum of artistic and literary material requisite for the cultured life. The cramping of existence in apartment life and the crowding of life by business transactions have made it necessary to reduce the space and time of culture to a fraction of one's being. Strange is it that, when science is revealing the monstrous extent of space and gigantic lapse of time in great galaxies beyond our own galactic system, art should be afforded such narrow space, such restricted time!

"GET CULTURED QUICK!"

This space-time condensation of beauty, which suggests a "canned culture," tends to make us repudiate the ideal of culture as quality of life apart from quantity of existence. But the condensation of culture is not due to any special appreciation of its intrinsic fineness, as the perfume in an attar of roses; no, it is only an attempt to economize space and time, attention and effort, which must be devoted to more serious concerns. The effect of such frugality is to show that culture is still necessary, and that it can be carried on in connection with business; an effect at once idealistic and practical.

The particular methods of securing the quintessence of culture are well known, because they are widely advertised. Often, alas! they are of the "get cultured quick" variety. We recognize them in the "one hundred best books" and "one hundred most famous paintings"; in a shelf of books shorter than the reader is tall or the best of a world-author in a single volume. Culture is thus condensed, boiled down, triturated. It is loaded like a revolver—good but dangerous.

There are parallel compressions in time. In order to appreciate and cope with them, consider the contrasted admonitions of Doctor Johnson and the late President Eliot: "Read anything five hours a day and you will become learned"; "Read these books fifteen minutes a day and you will soon become cultured." Apparently the difference between five full hours and just one quarter of one depends upon the quality of the literature and the care in choosing it. But the real difference between clocks of the eighteenth and twentieth centuries appears in the fact that theirs moved in the mood of leisure while ours tick to the tune of business.

SO BIG!

When the cultured person is confronted by these space-time condensations, he is likely to become disconcerted, discouraged. His city or even his suburban dwelling, where the meals are prepared in kitchenettes and eaten in nooks, provides no room for an old-fashioned library, except as he might install it on the empty side of a two-car garage. His routine, dictated by the subway guard or conductor of the commuter's train, to say nothing of his stenographer, absorbs the hours that might be devoted to less exacting masters of art and literature. He must, it seems, get his culture in the quintessential manner so broadly advertised and with such authority sanctioned. He can do no better than give a short time to a short shelf. But the would-be cultured person need not despair, since man and mind are distinct from space and time.

The extent of the library measured in shelf-feet and the array of art-prints often known by their numbers have little to do with the case of culture. It is rather the way that one feels about books and pictures, and his attitude toward them, that makes for the cultured life. For culture itself is chiefly a feeling, an attitude. How many books did Homer have, or how large was even Shakespeare's library? How much time did Wordsworth or Wagner devote to the artificial culture which had little to do with what they saw and heard? Let a sensitive mind devote itself, not five hours or fifteen minutes, but fifteen seconds a day to a cultural subject, and it will doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing the sheaves of sweetness and light with it. A preacher can educe a discourse of sufficient length from the fruitful handful of words in a text; an editor can get his story from some flying phrase in the news; or a physician make out an illness from a merely fugitive symptom. So the brain that is spontaneous and sensitive can elicit culture from a quotation repeated within the limits set by the quarter-minute.

CULTURE AS A LUBRICANT

If one really gets what is contained in a glance at a masterpiece or absorbs what is pressed into a verse, he gets as much culture as is findable in dawdling for hours or rushing for minutes over standard works. Of course, any one can give more than the fifteen seconds referred to—the length of time that he gives to his brains when he reads a sentence, or to his lungs when he stays under water. Such a brief period was cited for "short swallow flights of song" only to combat the idea that culture is a matter of time.

Let the cultured person go on living and working just about as before, except that now he has culture as the permanent mood of his being. Then he can go about his affairs in pretty much the same manner, and need only consider how doing this and that may bear upon his mind. His mental food is the same except for its new seasoning; his diet is varied in its dessert only. His machine has better oil.

If a person is engaged in routine work, so much of which is now being taken up by robots, he can leave his hands to their task and let his mind bring forth its subconscious, or superconscious, powers to indulge the culture implicit in a poem, picture or aria. The amount of time that goes to waste or slips down between the interstices of common activity is incalculable. It is this time-leakage which one can devote to his daily culture.

In physical culture, one may rest satisfied with a "daily dozen" aided by radio and abetted by life insurance, or he can work the exercise-idea into his habitual movements, as in walking to the station, climbing stairs or handling ordinary objects. In like manner, mental culture can be combined with, or allowed to act as the guide of, the common conduct of the mind. The important factor is the adoption of the culture-idea and the engendering of the culture-habit.

The "I-have-no-time" excuse is invalid, since one has all the time there is. His cigars and golf clubs know that, or her cigaret case and compact are thus acquainted with time, so that the temporal excuse for non-culture is in vain. Charles Lamb had no time for essays, but he knew how to make moments out of an apparent nothing. Elihu Burritt, the linguistic blacksmith, had no time, but in "no-time-at-all" he learned a variety of languages which his hammer beat out of the resounding anvil. Roosevelt had no time in the strenuous life of politics and all forms of public work, yet he produced a shelf of books and lived a life of both word and deed. Then, there are less spectacular but more numerous individuals whose brief-cases contain works of literature as well as blank reports and mercantile memoranda. These use their culture to form the sky-line above the street of common occupation.

CULTURE FOR COMMUTERS

The "I-have-no-time" excuse makes one overlook the fact that man's brain is moved by other forces than the wheels within his watch. It is proverbial to the point of being bromidic that we are wont to appeal to busy people, and not to the members of the leisure class, when extra work is to be done. The more one does, the more one can do. This is because exercise strengthens nerve as well as muscle, the brain as well as the body.

This is due, likewise, to a peculiar principle of reinforcement whereby one brain-process in operation aids and is aided by another one at work. Eye helps ear, the hand the foot, the arm the leg. So a busy life of affairs is a fruitful field for the arts.

If we cannot take time, we can make time; it's the beat of interest in the heart, not the tick of the pin within the clock that makes us what we are to be.

The special allocation of one's hours and the general condensation of his busy life are met, nowadays, by equivalent compressions of culture stuff. When this is advertised with the suggestion that the mere possession of the prints and books, as things physical, will make one cultured, the enterprise is not sincere. But when the buyer of the condensed book of poems or limited list of prints intends to make use of these, the case is different. Such a would-be cultured person does more than buy the bottle; he takes the remedy. So, likewise, does he partake of the reprinted, reproduced volume or painting.

These handbooks and pocket portfolios suggest the very idea in question—culture in a busy life, or reading as one runs. There is no commuter who, in the course of a business career, travels the equivalent of a trip around the world who cannot likewise make the journey equipped with handbooks which will supply the art and history of the countries he may travel ideally as his daily train makes its shuttle-movements in the monotonous to-and-fro of an active life. One's bridge score might suffer from the introduction of culture among commuters, but the attempt to read to the accompaniment of wheels can lead to nothing but ultimate satisfaction.

WHAT CRAMPS YOUR STYLE?

One's style is cramped, these days, by something more than the restricted space of his apartment and the restless movement of the train or trolley in which he is carried about. We suffer from sophistication and distraction, as these are promoted by science in theory and practise. Theoretical science in its popular forms, supplied by some short treatise or magazine article, puts one in touch with the knowledge of the day, but the touch is so light as to engender superficiality. This sophistication appears in physics and psychology; we are supposed to master Einstein and Freud when we are not familiar with Newton and Descartes. We assume to know the situation in the universe—with the earth thought of as in full motion—when we have difficulty with it thought of as at rest. We expect to master mind as stirred by emotion when we have not caught up with its simplest sensations.

Let a person who dabbles in the most advanced forms of the new physics of relativity and the new astronomy of remote nebulæ, ask himself these questions: If a star, like one of the bright ones in the constellation of Orion, rises, say, at eleven o'clock the first of November, what time will the star rise the first of December? Earlier or later?

If two hours earlier, why? The earlier-or-later question is merely a matter of observation; the other is a matter of simple mental arithmetic involving the division of twenty-four by twelve, or hours by months. Why not first obtain some sure and simple knowledge based upon personal observation before dilating upon physical conceptions hinging upon a geometry unknown to Euclid, a physics of which Newton was innocent?

SCIENTIFIC SOPHISTICATION

Or let one who is so impressed by the new notions of ductless glands as to refer to an individual as having a "pituitary personality" try to discover what self-consciousness, as such, really means. Or, if he is inclined to refer jauntily to "complexes" of an inferiorizing or superiorizing sort, let him try to describe the difference between phlegmatic and sanguine temperaments. Ay, let him practise psychology of a simpler sort and thus seek to determine the qualities of visual and auditory sensation, or what eye sees and ear hears. After that it will be time to take up the glands and complexes.

What one reads in sensational science, or hears discussed by others who have read, begets sophistication. Such pseudo-wisdom tends to lure one away from the knowledge that comes from observation and just as fully beguiles one from books—books of the older, classic sort. What we can actually see with our eyes and understand when we read appears tame in comparison with the light gleams of insight and wordy vocabulary which we exercise when we dabble in nouveau science. There are savants who should and do make a business of such things, but we are not among them. It's our business to come abreast of organized knowledge and standardized literature before we yield to the eyes and ears that itch for novelties. Since this itching is now in full operation, we are confronted by an age of sophistication rather than one of culture.

A DISTRACTED AGE

Distraction is another pitfall supplied by the application of science to popular entertainment. We live in an age of manufactured pleasure and artificial entertainment. This puts us into what we might call a metallic mood. We desire to extend the sway of the immortal "can." Canned foods were made necessary by the ever-yawning distance between garden and table; between summer and winter. Cans of food have come to stay. But it may be otherwise with the condensation of art and entertainment. Doubtless we shall continue to rejoice in the canned speed of the automobile. But we need not extend the sway of tin to the arts. We need not think that a radio-outfit can take the place of one's own piano or oust the book-shelf from the corner. Probably there is culture in music obtainable from radio; Dr. Walter Damrosch, for example, is looking after that. But the substitution of wave-lengthened entertainment for actual playing and sing-ing, for quiet reading and conversing, is bound to beget distraction, if not confusion worse confounded.

The age that we have left behind us, now referred to as "Victorian," the "Mauve Decade," the "'90s," or the "side-saddle epoch," was an age of grace. Men sensed money, but their money-motive was that of providing comfort and luxury. Women were alive to beauty in costume and coiffure, altho somewhat dull and opaque to "sex appeal." Not all the world had become a stage or show, a Follies or Vanities. But there was a graceful way of living which combined intellectual culture with social refinement; a way of living which, for the time, has taken leave to make room for what we believe to be the spirit of candor, which keeps the censor busy; a spirit of candor in which no culture is, or in which culture assumes the form of being fully informed and thoroughly sophisticated.

The culture person may well sound the cry, "Back to books!" Not all culture is in such full binding; some of it may be of the loose-leaf variety. But it is safe to build a cultured life upon a book-foundation. Some culture with some people comes just from living. Certain sensitive souls appear to draw culture out of the air they breathe. Others, like artists and musicians, are able to generate culture out of the things they do, such is their spontaneity. But in those whose degree of intellectual sensitivity and spontaneity is limited by meager talent and warned perhaps by the exigencies of actual life are in the most strategic position behind a barricade of books. They should observe and function in a culture-manner, but it will be literature which will best help them to live cultured lives.

THE SCISSORS OF CULTURE

After one has surmounted the half-real, half-imaginary obstructions to culture found in constricted space and restricted time, he can appreciate the suggestion that the best pathway to culture is one that the individual himself blazes. This does not mean that he is to become artist or writer, still less that he intends to innovate still another esthetic novelty and artistic nuisance. No, it means only that he go at culture with a will to make it rampant and not couchant only. This is to be done by his hand. He can use his cultural zeal to ply the shears in cutting clippings for a scrap-book. Thomas Jefferson did that in the interests of his own free thinking when he clipped from the Scriptures the portions that appealed to a rationalist. The enterprise was excellent until his followers reprinted the scissors-and-paste volume as *Jefferson's Bible*. Elbert Hubbard did the same with secular literature, which was wise on his part, as well as thrifty on the part of his heirs, who are now selling reprints of *Elbert Hubbard's Scrap-Book*.

In addition to a culture scrap-book of art and literature once removed, the cultured person can carry on his aggressive culture by means of pencil or fountain-pen. This cultural act of making notes may begin with a book already printed in the name of its author and end with a kind of book written by the reader. No one who takes up a book written by an author whose pen had the might of a sword should be unarmed. He should cross pens with the writer. That is, he should do Balzac's *Human Comedy* over again, however lightly, by underlining the striking sentences or even dividing the works up into their proper chapters. He might try to catalog the characters and their places in the *Comedy*, as if to make a Balzacian telephone directory.

WRITING ONE'S OWN BOOKS

But one's own note-book is more important as a human comedy. Such a personal work can show one how his culture can change natural respiration into the systematic breathing exercise of a Yogi, or make the course of life like a stream of consciousness. A Diary should record one's own doings with the fidelity of a weather report on one's own skies. A blank book written up as Reminiscences can involve other people and public events. A Journal can take on a more literary character by treating books in a personal way as friends. The literary result may not be *Pepys' Diary*, but the Pepys habit of recording personal reactions to life can form a pathway to culture, which is largely a consciousness of existence.

The main thing is to cultivate active culture in the form of such incessant essays, whether they are to be syndicated or not. Such a graphic method will enable one to make culture, but not necessarily money, by writing.

There are books designed for such a purpose, but often they are devoted to only the exceptional experiences in one's usual career. *Plays I Have Seen* and *Operas I Have Heard* are of this sort, and seem somewhat like a blank book for bridge scores, or account books. *A Line a Day* is a better model to follow, altho that "line" should be understood liberally. A portable typewriter, while not the pocket-size of pencil or pen, has the value of facilitating writing; then, the results achieved with lettered keys are more likely to impress one than does his handwriting. But, again, it is the intellectual habit of cognizing life as it passes by, which is the important factor in culture by writing. Anything which will help one to take these verbal snapshots is to be recommended. By following them, one can produce a *John Doe—His Book.*

PITFALLS AND PRECIPICES

The paths of culture have their pitfalls and involve their detours. The larger ones, or precipices of space and time, have already been observed. But these gigantic considerations, along with the whole business of living and making a living, are more like obstacles in the way than pitfalls in the very path. We are vividly aware of their presence.

Perhaps the most perilous traps are those of an emotional sort. Before we attempt culture, just as before we take up golf or bridge, we feel unworthy of the task. That is the pitfall of inferiority. Then, after we have indulged in a certain amount of culture, we are inclined to think less of other people. That is the trap of superiority. Together, they may form a pair of culture "complexes." Culture, as we understand it, is something associated with men of genius and privileged people: we hesitate to undertake it. That's where we inferiorize self-ward, while on the same grounds, after we have attained to the lesser heights of the thing, we begin to superiorize others. The first state is worse than the last. One should permit no feeling of intellectual inferiority, no lack of Phi Beta Kappa key on his stomach or Ph.D. on his stationery, to keep him out of the kingdom.

But once in the realm of culture, one's slight acquaintance with the fine arts will engender the danger of dilettantism. For nothing that has been said about the function of feeling in art can exaggerate its importance in the mind of one who soon comes to repose in a sort of culture complacency. This is because of his *diletto*, his delight in beauty depicted in art, described in literature. The severity of study and arduousness of professional life are wanting; hence the cultured person, tho alert at bridge and zealous over golf, is inclined to become lackadaisical in literature. He has read the book, heard the symphony, and done the gallery. But to read a superior work is to make only a beginning; to hear *Tristan and Isolde* is only to start on a course of half a dozen auditions; and to do the gallery is but to locate the rooms in which the particular collections are to be found.

LITTLE LUXURIES AND PERMANENT PLEASURES

There is no jumping at conclusions equal in apparent ease to those of the fine arts. We read the review of a book or skim over its initial pages, and that settles it. We give one look at an impressionistic canvas and it is, as it were, slashed by the evil eye. We listen to a few strains of a new opera or symphony and hasten away as tho, like the musical critic, we had to have the copy of our review in at the editor's desk. Our conclusions are of the simple order of "fine" or "no good," in which no technique is. There are no "fine" works of art, or "no-good" ones either, since these are descriptions of commodities or people. Hence it is for the cultured mind to discover just wherein the beauty lies or ugliness is found.

The progress of cultured dilettantism, which seeks its little luxuries instead of permanent pleasure, may promote a habit of incessant seeking—a habit pathetically apparent in theatergoers, novel-readers and globe-trotters. These should realize, unless it is too late, that according to the gospel of culture he that seeketh shall find, to him that asketh it shall be given, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Then, let the true disciple of culture view his perceptions of the natural order, his readings of books and conversations with talented people as ways and means to ends and goals. Let him consider himself a troubadour, or finder, who wanders along the paths of culture for the time only, and who expects to find repose in ideas and feelings that fade not away.

DIGGING IN

Since the cultured life is largely the conscious life, the person of taste and thought can make his culture imitate his routine. No one, unless he be a traveling salesman or tourist or vagabond, presumes to live a life of restless detachment from the world. Instead of such fluttering and flying, he settles down in his nest. He is either to some manor born or he takes root in a community where he attains to a certain social status. No one, unless he be an artist or some sort of agent, works sporadically with painful intervals between the periods of occupation. He establishes himself in a business or profession and functions as a part of a system. Now, culture need not be as definite a state as one's community or as exacting an occupation as one's career, but it requires a degree of stedfastness. Otherwise it is deluding dilettantism.

The latitudinarianism and accompanying looseness of popular culture is to be cured by specialization according to taste. Some waters can be scooped up from the surface, but cooler, purer streams are found only by sinking artesian wells. Such wells of culture may be dug by the cultured individual when he decides to pursue, for the time, such a thing as romantic music or Gothic architecture. If he be ecclesiastically minded, he can find an appeal in the bright but inflexible figures among the Italian primitives; if more worldly, the glow of the Flemish school will more easily engage him. He can find universal wisdom in Balzac, strangeness in Dostoievsky, and beautiful impropriety in Flaubert. In opera, he can enjoy musical holidays with the suavity of Italian compositions, yet, for himself in particular, wait for Wagner's *Ring Cycle* to be given.

Depth in culture is desirable, yet this can be profundity of feeling and a settled state of mind rather than anything resembling the lower levels of metaphysics and mathematics. When the determined culturist descends along his chosen line, he will find that he is in touch with others who have gone down, since it is peculiar to the arts, and sciences, too, to meet at a common level, as in a cavern approached at different points. When, then, one knows his Raphael or Cézanne, his Shakespeare and Ibsen, his Wagner and Verdi, he knows painting, poetry and music.

Remarkable to relate, there are only five fine arts, hence the field of esthetic culture is nobly limited. But the real culturist achieves culture from both art and common life, and, like St. Paul, is a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians.

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